



Issue #116

1999 #416
2000 #416

From Autumn to Ashes
Against Me!
Alkaline Trio
Every Time I Die
Bury Your Dead
Circa Survive
Haste The Day
I Am the Avalanche
Orange
This Moment
A Wilhelm Scream
Bear Vs. Shark
Plain White T's
XBXXRX
Chiodos
Mikki James
Gatsby's American Dream
Nural
Manntis
Ion Dissonance
Slab
The Minks
Mommy and Daddy

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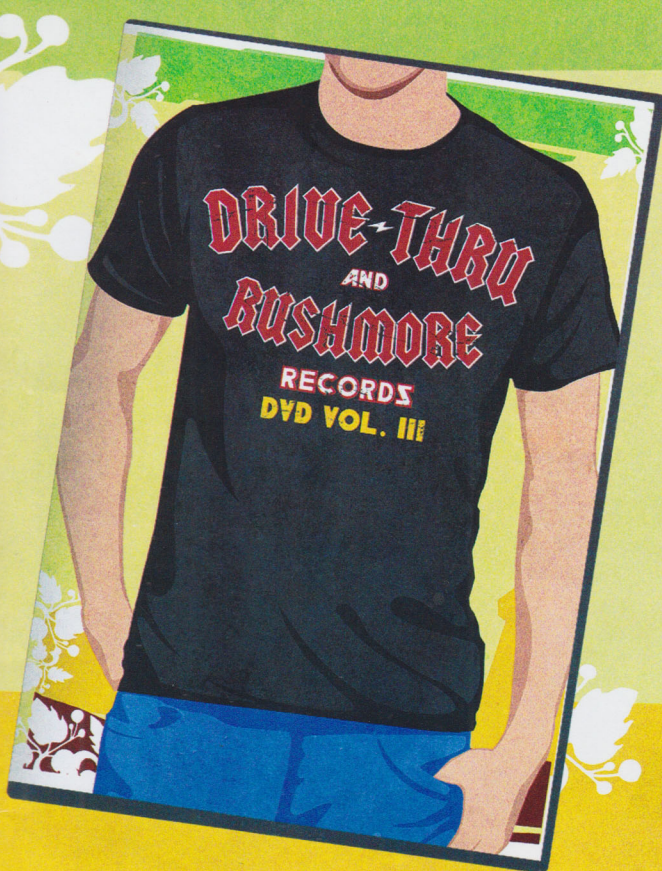
Featuring Tracks
By:

AGAINST ME!
ANTI-FLAG
COALESCE
DARKEST HOUR
JAWBREAKER
MXPX
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MATT SKIBA

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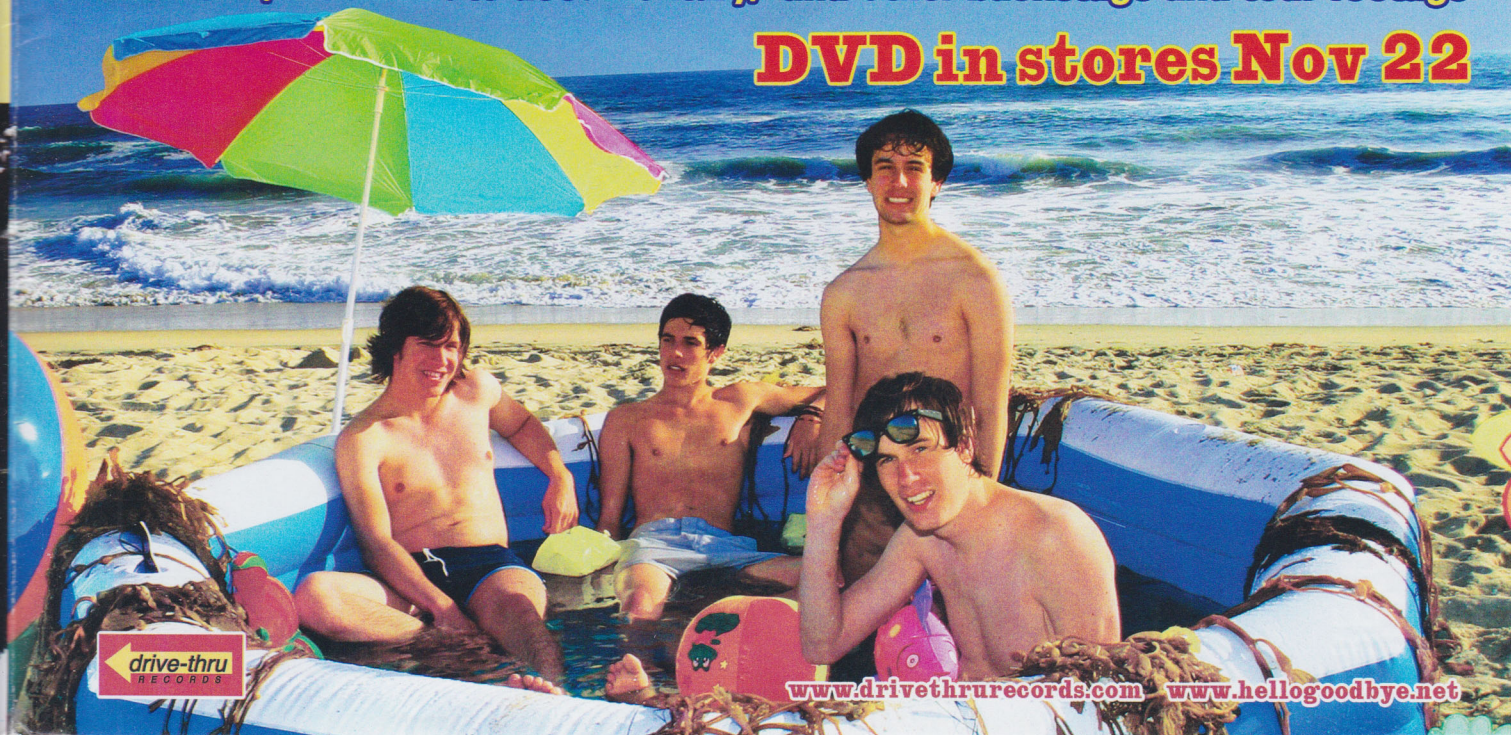
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FALL OUT BOY Murphys

THRICE RISE AGAINST

THURSDAY

TAKING BACK SUNDAY

HOT SNAKES



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10.18.05

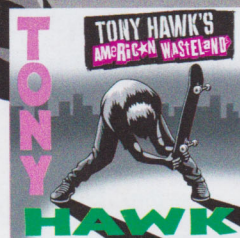
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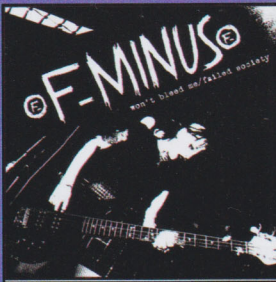
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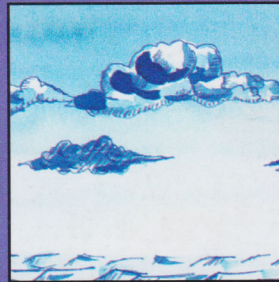
GOD FORBID



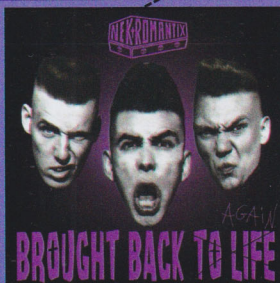
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SAT OCT 15

SUN OCT 16

SHOWCASE SHOWDOWN

FINGERS OF FURY
MEDIA ORPHAN - SATYR
YOUR BROKEN WORDS
MARIA SOME
TORN OF WINGS
CHANGE OF HEART
UNDERSTATED
BURIED BESIDE YOU
BURIED AND FORGOTTEN

TUE OCT 18

HELLBATS

ZOMBIE
THE SKUNK
LONESOME
REBELS

WED OCT 19

THE HIGHER
Still Life
Projector
point by numbers
cave at rest

THU OCT 20

Odd Project
DIVIDE THE DAY
Love Hate Hero
PORPOISE
THE LIGHT SEASON

FRI OCT 21

SHOWCASE SHOWDOWN
SEMI FINAL
EPISODE OF WAR
DEATH IS ETERNAL
BLUSH - FENMORE
BOTTLES FOR NIKKI
THE MORTARS
BLIND EYES
LIVE FOR TODAY
ELECTRIC PYRE

SAT OCT 22

winter solstice
BLOODLINED
CALLIGRAPHY
ADRA
(CD RELEASE)
TAKE THIS HAND
STICK TO YOUR GUNS

SUN OCT 23

THE METEORS
THE SLANDERIN
THE HOWLERS
PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS

SAT OCT 28

HEMLOCK
DRIVEN A.D.
SANGRE
ELEMENTS IN A VAIN
OF ENVY

SAT OCT 29

A Static Lullaby
AUDITORY APHASIA TO THE KILL
DEAD LETTER DIARIES
ATHORN FOR EVERY HEART

WED NOV 2

THE EULOGY TOUR
SYMPHONY
Shattered Realm
HOODS
BLACK HEART

SUN NOV 6

BLITZ
TOTAL CHAOS
ENDLESS STRUGGLE
PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS

FRI NOV 11

SKARE TACTIC
BRING IT ON
EVERYMAN FOR HIMSELF
NOT YOURS HARD HEAD

THU NOV 17

CONCOMBRE
ZOMBI
HAYRIDE
HELL
PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS

SAT NOV 19

NO INNOCENT VICTIM
SYMPHONY IN PERIL
BLOODLINED
CALLIGRAPHY
INKED IN BLOOD
LOOKING FORWARD

SAT NOV 26

PHOBIA
SEVEN GENERATIONS
autonomy
armistice
SOCIALIZED CRUCIFIXION
SPEAKERS TBA

SUN DEC 4

MENTAL
BLACKLISTED
IRON AGE
PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS

SAT NOV 5

BURY YOUR DEAD
TERROR
SCARS OF TOMORROW
August Burns Red

WED NOV 9

NODES OF
RANVER
SCARLET
PLUS SPECIAL GUEST HEADLINER

SAT NOV 12

IT DIES TODAY
Piggy Back
STILL REMAINS
BUILT FOR VIOLENCE
JACK KNIFE

FRI NOV 18

OBLIGE
UNDERNEATH
THE GUN

FRI NOV 25

MY RUIN
Bleed The Sky
PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS

THU DEC 1

THE BRIEFS
PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS

MON DEC 5

MOST PRECIOUS
BLOOD
WITH HONOR
MODERN LIFE IS WAR
DISTANCE THIS IS HELL

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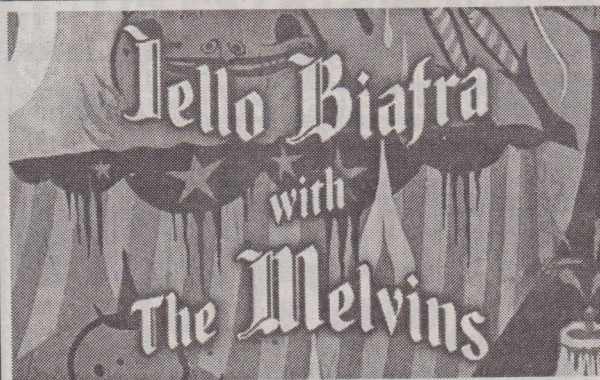


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TSU SHI MA MI RE



saturday november 5 ► el rey theatre

18 & over



november 16 ► the fonda



dios (malos)

SWORDS

saturday november 19 ► el rey theatre

on sale now



the DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN

HELLA • HORSE THE BAND
THE FLASHBULB

november 20 ► el rey theatre

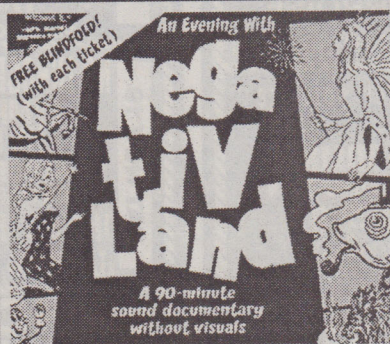
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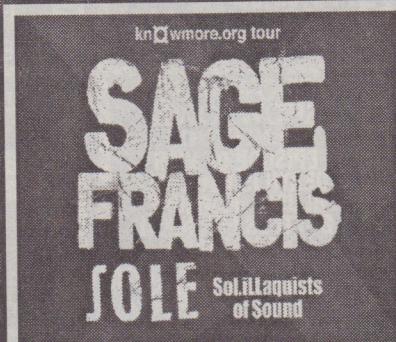
THE GO! TEAM

SMOOSH • THE GRATES

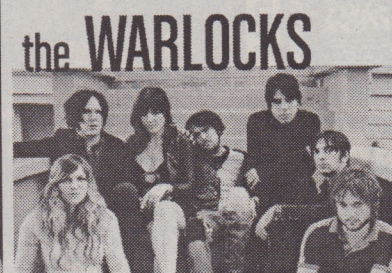
october 20 ► el rey theatre



october 23 & 24 ► el rey theatre



friday oct. 28 ► the fonda



the WARLOCKS

GRIS GRIS • ARIEL PINK

saturday october 29
el rey theatre



CIRCA SURVIVE
MUTEMATH • MASHLIN
saturday october 29 ► the fonda



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DENVER HARBOR
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BUCK-O-NINE

MUSTARD PLUG

THE TOASTERS

GO JIMMY GO

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INDIE ROCK \$15



FINCH

PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS

WED-OCT 19

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Yesterday's Rising
Mikoto • Chiodos
Kane Hodder

THU-OCT 20

INDIE ROCK \$10

I Am The Avalanche
Paramore
Rock Kills Kid
The Audition
The Breakup

FRI-OCT 21

INDIE ROCK \$12

Bleed the Dream
Roses Are Red
Stutterfly
Bedlight for BlueEyes
The Confession

SAT-OCT 22

INDIE ROCK \$10

Blake Miller
(of Moving Units)
Plus Special Guests

SUN-OCT 23

INDIE ROCK \$10

Bullets and Octane
The Vacation
Takota
Rock N Roll Soldiers

MON-OCT 24

INDIE ROCK \$10

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The Minus Story • The Valley Arena

THU-OCT 27

PUNK ROCK \$10

Union 13
Destruction Made Simple
Civet • Hot Potty • Schizm

FRI-OCT 28

ROCKABILLY \$12

Three Bad Jacks
Calavera • Moonlight Cruisers

SAT-OCT 29

INDIE ROCK \$12

Pretty Girls Make Graves
The Matachine • Razrez

MON-OCT 31

HALLOWEEN \$10

Great Glass Elevator
Briertone
Cavil at Rest
Jupiter

TUE-NOV 1

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A Fall Farewell
Loftus • Acentric
Five Minute Ride
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Dreams of Reality

SAT-NOV 5

INDIE ROCK \$14



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WED-NOV 9

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Fri. 10/7 * \$12	VOODOO GLOW SKULLS Knockout * Matamoska * The Crash Cadillacs
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Tue. 10/11 * \$8	The Phenomenauts Cellphish * Isolated Victims Donkey Punch * Lykus Sour Grapes * The Anti-Fun Society	Thur. 10/13 * \$8	The Wrecked * Dead Wookiee The Drencrons * The Relentless No Purchase Necessary
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Fri. 10/14 * \$8	The Attraction * Noise Attack My New Life * A Moments Notice Uncommon Sense * Memorium Deadman Walking	Sun. 10/16 * \$8 / \$10	Red Gun Radar Room of Amontillado Julieta Martyr * React
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Mon. 10/17 * \$8 / \$10	MY AMERICAN HEART JUST SURRENDER * LORENE DRIVE FAULTER * AUGUST HOUSE
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Tue. 10/18 * \$8	Jaded52 (Ex-Face To Face) Does Of Adolescence * Laid Avid * The Youth	Wed. 10/19 * \$8	LIFE OR DEATH D.O.R.K. OSCULATION
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Thur. 10/20 * \$8	Safe Haven M.M.V.F.	Thur. 10/25 * \$8	YOUR FINAL BREATH BELAY MY LAST ROB CARSON BLESS THIS CHAOS
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Wed. 10/26 * \$8	Capulet The Missing Chums	Thur. 10/27 * \$8	Episode Of War No Windows
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Tue. 11/1 * \$8	Coretta Scott * One Way Letter My Former Self * Final Chapter	Tue. 11/8 * \$8	LOCKING YOUR CAR DOORS THE SONS OF ADAM DEXTER DANGER ARTURO * LEFT OVER THE HEAVYWEIGHTS
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Wed. 11/9 * \$8	THE HIGHER * UMBRELLAS SMALL TOWNS BURN A LITTLE SLOWER TOKYO ROSE	Fri. 11/11 * \$8	Near Miss Kaddisfly The Bangkok Five
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Mon. 11/14 * \$8	The Fully Down Maida * Four Years Strong * Next Door Bad Teenage Mustache * Safe Haven
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JAdED-52 (ex Face To Face)

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Laid
Avid
The Youth

Tues. October 25th

Belay My Last
Rob Carson
Porcelain * Your Last Breath
Bless This Chaos
To End All Battles
Heart In Hand

Friday, October 28th

HALLOWEENCORE

COME DRESSED IN YOUR HALLOWEEN BEST
bands to be announced.

Tuesday Nov. 1st

Coretta Scott

One Way Letter
My Former Self
Final Chapter

Tuesday Nov. 8th

LEFT OVER

The Sons Of Adam
Locking Your Car Doors
Dexter Danger
The Heavyweights

Friday, November 11th

NEAR MISS

KADDISFLY The Bangkok Five
Dead Letter Diaries

Tuesday Nov. 14th

THE FULLY DOWN

Four Year Strong
MAIDA

Bad Teenage Mustache
Safe Haven * Next Door

Monday Dec. 12th

DIVIDETHE DAY

IN MEMORY
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SHOWS

Saturday Oct 15
The Slanderin - Mad Ramblers - Night Breed - Demonikats

Sunday Oct 16
Dibuk - The Noegoego - Ayera In Scoria - Covet

Monday Oct 17
Metal Mondays

Tuesday Oct 18
Louis & The Joey G. Band

Wednesday Oct 19
The Wrecked - Skidward - Fighter Pilot - Indoor Fireworks

Thursday Oct 20
Generic - Sounds Of Urchin - Bargain Music - Mystery Hangup - Speed of Sound

Friday Oct 21
Elvis Wesley and The Pistol Whippers - The Devil Bats - Bastard Son - Dead End Stiffs Autumn Dervish

Saturday Oct 22
Sugar Puss

Sunday Oct 23
Feedback - Tres - Screams Of Serenity - Long Beach Unified - Anal Death

Monday Oct 24
Metal Mondays

Tuesday Oct 25
Louis & The Joey G. Band

Wednesday Oct 26
Moonlight Junkie - Palace - Donkey Punch - Arc Welders - Burn on Dakota

Thursday Oct 27
Drowse - Valid Effort - Branded

Friday Oct 28
Nip Drivers - Bulimia Banquet - Radioactive chickenheads - The Jack Brewer Band

Saturday Oct 29
The Dead Billys - Demonia - The Fiends - Potential Threat

Sunday Oct 30
Badfish - Just Us - Pacific Roots Factory

Monday Oct 31
Metal Mondays

Tuesday Nov 1
Louis & The Joey G. Band

Wednesday Nov 2
Inoculators - Looner - Stella - The Mortars

Thursday Nov 3
The Broken Bastards - Bull Lee - The Quirks - 500 Miles to Memphis

Friday Nov 4
Dawn of Ashes - Analog Driver - Bleak - Izevil

Saturday Nov 5
Walk Proud - Bullet Treatment - Mother Natures Revenge - Deadbeat Sinatra - Grave For The Fireflies - The Nipples

Sunday Nov 6
Insane Root

Monday Nov 7
Metal Mondays

Tuesday Nov 8
Louis & The Joey G. Band

Wednesday Nov 9
Psycho Nubs - Kings of Sleep - Tyrannis

Thursday Nov 10
God Of War - Eye for an Eye

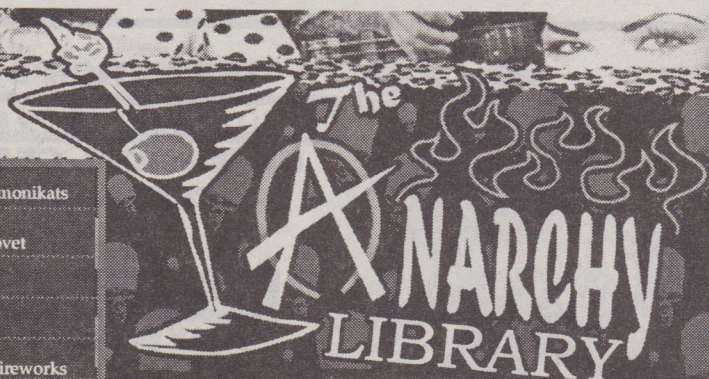
Friday Nov 11
The Bombshells - Deadman Walking - DMF

Saturday Nov 12
Rockabilly Night

Sunday Nov 13
Reggae Night

Monday Nov 14
Metal Mondays

Tuesday Nov 15
Louis & The Joey G. Band



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Hurry Up Offense - www.HurryUpOffense.net

Forget The Jones - www.ForgetTheJones.com

Mindy Misty - www.MindyMisty.com

Ahimsa Theory - www.AhimsaTheory.com

Egg Roll Willie - www.EggrollWillie.com

Empty Handed - www.EmptyHandedMusic.com

The Pubes - www.ThePubes.com

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OCT. 14 - THE POLITICIANS

SLAB, FRIDAY KNIGHTS, KBN

OCT. 15 - THE CROWD, THE IGNORANT

OCT. 20 - THE VIBRATORS, CELL BLOCK 5,

FIRECRACKER 500, EPIDEMICS, OCA

OCT. 22 - "HEP C AWARENESS BENEFIT"

FLOCK OF GOO GOO, NO SOLUTION, SHOTDOWN,

BOBBIE TRAP, THE HUDSON DRASS

OCT. 28 - THE SKULLS SWITCHBLADE STELETT, KISS ME DEADLY

HABBOTOWN SAINTS, THE KOSSITS

OCT. 29 - DWARVES, MONDO GENERATOR,

TURBO AC's, CELL BLOCK 5,

CIVET

NOV. 12 - BR.KNOW, POURHABIT,

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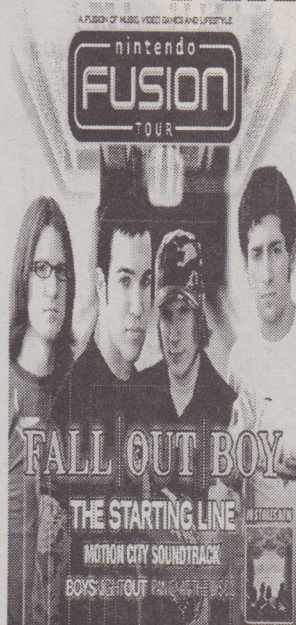
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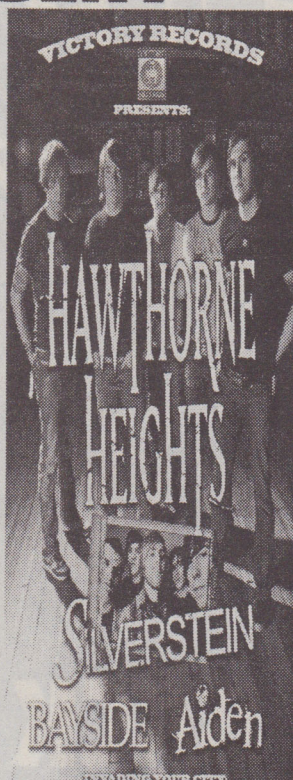


OCTOBER 26
MESA AMPHITHEATRE

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Nintendo

BLUNDER



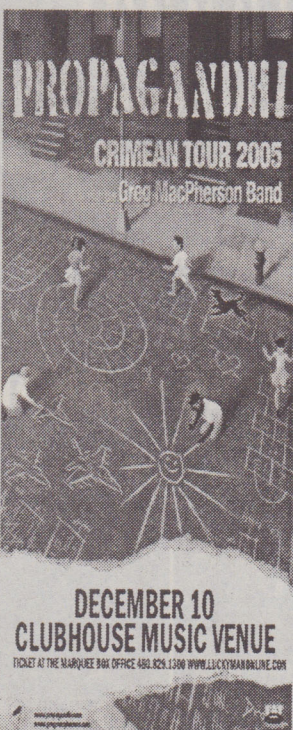
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NOVEMBER 16
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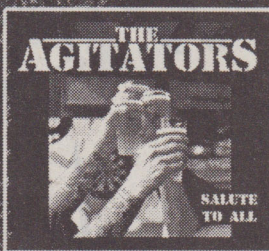
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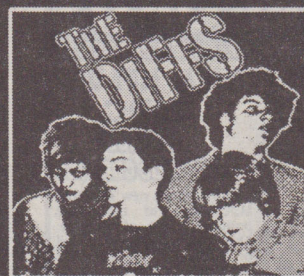
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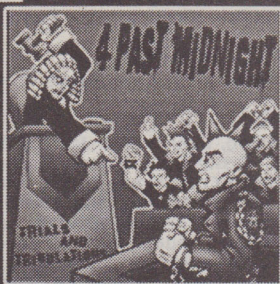
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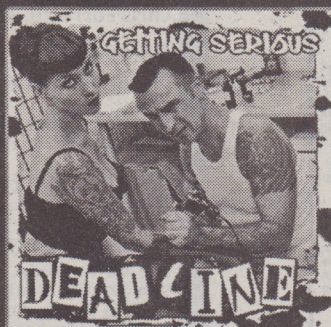
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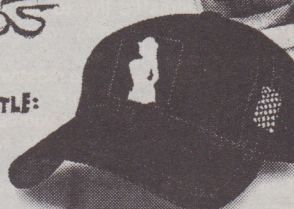
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THE FORECAST

SHANNON BURNS/BASS, VOCALS

My scariest Halloween experience: when I was in 8th grade some friends and I were walking around town trick or treating and such and we walked by our school...now there is a staircase that comes up from the basement of the school and it was really dark out. All of a sudden this man in a Michael Myers mask, outfit...the whole shebang. He came up the stairs really slow...looking straight-forward and we just froze and kinda stood there. Well thinking it was someone we knew we walked up to him and started talking to him...he never said one word and just stared at us...so we walked away and he followed us for a few blocks. We started to get really scared so we ran away and about 15 minute later we saw a cop car drive by with him in the back seat...we were freaking out. We never found out what the deal was with that either...it still creeps me out today.

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: twizzlers, milky ways, and bottle caps (the wonka candy)

What band scares me the most/why: Scary Kids Scaring Kids...they really are scary.haha

Best costume I have ever witnessed: my mom being the wicked witch of the west from The Wizard of Oz!

Scariest movie: I hate scary movies so I don't watch any.

Halloween is for: candy and orange colors.

What scares me: mannequins.... they seriously creep me out. I feel like they're going to come to life at any moment.... oh man I'm lame.

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JOHN BEATZ/DRUMS

My scariest Halloween experience: My hometown of Miller Place is/was a super scary place growing up. Basically, most of the kids in high school would go to this one place called woodland acres. So there would be about 400 kids out there throwing pumpkins, eggs at cars. (I know sounds dumb but its amazing what group mentality can do). Well I was in the 9th grade and my mom came out looking for me. I saw her car from a distance and I thought "wow my mom is about to get pulverized" (not five minutes earlier the cops came and left because they couldn't even get out of their car because they were getting pegged) and here comes my mom. So I screamed out, "no don't peg her," she got through unscathed, pretty freaking scary.

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag:

Sweet tarts, Guy around the block worked for Bachman, so Bachman pretzels, Bottle caps.

What band scares me the most/why: Bayside, their a bunch of lunatics. Actually can't even believe I can fall asleep at night...but The Sleeping are pretty scary looking, if you get up close to them.

Best costume I have ever witnessed: Punchline dressed as Insane Clown Posse.

Scariest movie: Halloween is a pretty scary movie. Scary movies should really be enjoyed by yourself at a high volume in a pitch-black room. Or if you're a band in a van, in the pitch black with headphones plugged into a DVD player. You really get the intended effect when you let yourself get scared.

Halloween is for: The dead to rise and their spirits to be felt.

What scares me: Someday dying is pretty harrowing. But guess whatbirth and death are the only things that are guaranteed. You only have so many Halloweens so enjoy them!

CHIODOS

CRAIG OWENS (SINGER)

My scariest Halloween experience: One time I got lost trick or treating and it was pure chaos as a child trying to find my mother surrounded by zombies and vampires!

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: Jamie Presley, a kit Kat bar, and a gift certificate to Taco Bell.

What band scares me the most/why: From First To Last, look at all that makeup and hair!

Best costume I have ever witnessed: One time my friend's dad had his puppy dressed up as a Sumo Wrestler, amazing!

Scariest movie: The Shining

What scares me: Not much!

BROCK/BASS PLAYER FOR CHEAP SEX

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: Twix, money and guitar picks. Fender Medium to heavy gauge please..the wide ones.

What band scares me the most/why: Bands with beards. Can't trust 'em...

Halloween is for: Whatever you want it to be. Me personally.. dressing up And getting hammered..

What scares me: In all honesty.. Bears

SUNSET ALLIANCE/BEFORE BRAILLE
OWNER/SINGER-GUITAR

My scariest Halloween experience: Attempting to watch the Thriller video at age 7. Even the behind the scene make-up sequences made me close my eyes and turn away. I caught about 15% of that film.

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: Diet chocolate, condoms, and Jesus pamphlets. or (bonus: 1075 Free Hours of AOL!)

What band scares me the most/why: The Donnas! If they're not robots from outer space preparing to take over our planet, then Spock doesn't have pointed ears! Fade away already!

Best costume I have ever witnessed: Ralph Macchio in the shower! What a cutie! Mr. Maggi whipped up that thing so fast. Daniël son wasn't planning on going to the dance before that! A proud moment for them both.

Scariest movie: Come on. The original Exorcist. Nothing else is scary in comparison...well, except for Empire Records. That movie scares me on so many different levels. Gasp/Puke in horror!

Halloween is for: Never growing up.

CHEAP SEX

JOHNNY O NEGATIVE/ GUITARIST

My scariest Halloween experience: When I was 11 or 12 I was trick or treating as a something, and I had a realistic BB Gun and the cops gave me a bunch of trouble for it. It was not scary like Horror, but it was scary as hell to think I was going to jail. Those cops are a nightmare I tell ya.

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: An Apple with a razor blade, how about an original copy of the Mad's "I hate music" 7". In that case the last thing I would want in my bag is all the records in the world. hahaha

What band scares me the most/why: That is a really good question, some bands scare me cause they are so bad. Rick Agnew of Adolescents scares me cause he is scary looking. All in all most scary band probably Anti-Seen circa 87, they would cut themselves, and throw the drum kit at the crowd, you never knew if they loved you or were gonna beat you up.

Best costume I have ever witnessed: A guy dressed as Bill Clinton (He looked like him too) with a desk mounted to his waist and a doll of

Monica Lewinski giving him head. That was classic.

Scariest movie: There is some great stuff from the 50's, I would say the original Texas Chainsaw, and the remake is pretty good too.

What scares me: Our political system. The state of the world in General sucks. Terrorism scares me. Nuclear destruction scares me. New Found Glory scares me.

DMONSTRATIONS

TETSUNORI/GUITAR VOCALS, NICK/BASS

My scariest Halloween experience: Tetsunori: When I was a hot ass drag queen named Ms. Goldfingers in 2004. I went to a lesbian party and a girl thought I was a "hot chick", and tried to grab my ass. She actually believed I was a girl! Nick: When I went to the same party and tried to meet up with Ms.Goldfingers.

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: Rice cakes., tofu and Okonomiyaki (Japanese egg pancake w/vegetables & pork) Nick: a razor, five dollars and a AAA road atlas from 1978.

Best costume I have ever witnessed: Tetsunori: Naked.

Nick: a t-shirt, which read "THIS IS MY HALLOWEEN COSTUME"

REIGNITION RECORDS - DEAD GIRLS RUIN EVERYTHING

JOJO LONGBOTTOM - GUITAR / VOCALS

My scariest Halloween experience: Seeing a plump white man dressed in all kids SHAQ clothes (sweatpants, tank top, hat, shoes, the whole nine) jammin out to SHAQ's Diesel Record on a portable CD player freakin out over the potency of the mushrooms he had just swallowed. True Story.

What band scares me the most/why: The Frogs. It's just scary how brilliant they are.

Best costume I have ever witnessed: 3 of my friends dressed up as the Blue Man Group terrorizing the bars with snare drums, glow sticks, and confetti.

Scariest movie: Trick or Treat.

What scares me: Modern music.

AUDIO KARATE

JASON CAMACHO

My scariest Halloween experience: Getting lost in the Dirty South on Halloween night while on a day off. After a couple of hours of not finding our location on the map it began to look a lot like the scenery from Deliverance.

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: The top three items I would like to see in my trick or treat bag are a severed head, dead goat, and a newt's head.

What band scares me the most/why: Slayer scares me a bit, seem em in concert a couple times and wanted to go to Church on the way home.

Best costume I have ever witnessed: Billy from Good Charlotte's stage clothing on Warped Tour... best tool costume I've ever layed eyes upon.

Halloween is for: Eating children and their candy.

What scares me: The number of little scenerster boys that still wear girls pants.

WARREN ANTHONY FITZGERALD/THE VANDALS
GUITARIST

My scariest Halloween experience: involved Oingo Boingo fans

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: Fish sticks, Hotdog on a stick, fish on a stick.

What band scares me the most/why: German spoken over a loud speaker- it never sounds

friendly.

Scariest movie: The Exorcist/Patch Adams

What scares me: West Nile virus and creamed corn.

THE FULLY DOWN (FEARLESS RECORDS)
DAN, GUITARIST

My scariest Halloween experience: the day we were turned away for being too old to trick or treat....thus we had no candy that night.....very scary!!!!

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: Double Edged Longsword, a battleaxe, the complete dragon Force Discography
What band scares me the most/why: The Misfits...toughest motherfuckers ever.

Best costume I have ever witnessed: Tie: Teen Wolf/Everyone in Gwar.

Scariest movie: Monster Squad

Halloween is for: everyone to dress a little bit sluttier.

What scares me: Gene Simmons' tongue

MEAN RED MUSIC/SCIENTIFIC LIFESTYLE
ZACH GRACE/GUITARIST

My scariest Halloween experience: When I was trapped in a trailer with a white trash tweaker who had a lot of guns.

Top three items I'd like to see in my trick or treat bag: Kirsten Dunst, Jessica Alba, and Rachel Weisz.

What band scares me the most/why: The Backstreet Boys, because people actually like that crap and because enough people like that crap to justify a record label launching a recent "Comeback."

Best costume I have ever witnessed: Big hairy fat guy dressed as Cinderella.

What scares me: Clear Channel

SEVENDUST

VINCE HORNSBY/BASS PLAYER

My scariest Halloween experience: I dressed up as Ace Frehley and my cat (Sylvester) attacked me because he didn't recognize me. He tried to scratch my eyes out!

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: \$3,000,000, 2 tickets to a private island in the Caribbean and a dozen oysters on the half shell with a Coors light

What band scares me the most/why: GWAR - they are monsters on stage

Best costume I have ever witnessed: I saw a dude in a black panther costume with a chick walking him while he was on all fours.

Scariest movie: Halloween

What scares me: My bar tab - that is absolutely the truth!

SEVENDUST

JOHN CONNOLLY, GUITARIST

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: Jagermeister, Skittles and Kit Kats
Best costume I have ever witnessed: The White Stripes onstage

Scariest movie: The Exorcist

Halloween is for: Demons

What scares me: The White Stripes

WITH HONOR

JAY AUST, GUITARIST

My scariest Halloween experience: trying to get to Taco Bell before 1am.

What band scares me the most/why: zombie apocalypse — who else is still crazy enough to wear face-paint in hardcore??

Best costume I have ever witnessed: my dad in a homemade viking helmet (a motorcycle helmet with cow horns).

Scariest movie: The Grudge (no, I'm serious the noise that kid made was freaky).

Halloween is for: Lovers

What scares me: Heights, gas prices, the amount of body hair on Will Farrell.

EARSHOT MEDIA

MIKE CUBILLOS

My scariest Halloween experience: Running out of candy halfway through the night and having to turn off our lights so kids didn't think we were home.

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: My wife, snickers, wax lips (in that order).

What band scares me the most/why: Seether cos they suck.

Scariest movie: From Justin to Kelly.

Halloween is for: getting fat on candy

What scares me: bad tunes and small-minded people.

YESTERDAYS RISING

BRANDON BOLMER / USER OF THE THROAT
AND DIAPHRAGM

My scariest Halloween experience: Knott's Scary Farm 02 - 03 - and 04

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: Skratz Magazine, Playboy and Hustler.

What band scares me the most/why: Dillinger Escape Plan, you never know when you're going to get straight up clocked in the face by a mic stand or guitar cab when watching them live....

Scariest movie: Amityville Horror (old and new) or Exorcism of Emily Rose because they are both true and can take place in real life. believe it.

Halloween is for: People who desperately wish they could be something else and people with mad cavities.

What scares me: The four horseman of the Apocalypse, and the mark of the beast.

HORRORPOPS

GEOFF KRESGE - GUITAR/VOX

My scariest Halloween experience: Being stalked by a masked killer

Top three items I'd like to see in my trick or treat bag: A mask, a machete and human body parts.

What band scares me the most/why: Shitty Malone & The Shittsville All-Stars because they're so damned good.

Best costume I have ever witnessed: A guy at Fetish Ball a few years ago that was dressed like Max Schrek as Nosferatu. It was amazing.

Scariest movie: The Hills Have Eyes.

Halloween is for: Candy apples and razor blades.

What scares me: Pop-music "divas."

THIRSTY EAR RECORDINGS

ROB BEAM- PROMOTION AND PRODUCTION
COORDINATOR

My scariest Halloween experience: Trying to wear a robot suit in 4th gradethat I couldn't really walk in. It was like being in a hot box.

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: Brittany Murphy, a year's supply of bit o' honey, and a green lantern power ring

What band scares me the most/why: Death Cab for Cutie. People listen to this?

Best costume I have ever witnessed: Saw these dudes in art school that made themselves up like the orcs from "Lord of the Rings (ten years before the movies). One guy had giant metal clamps for hands, and the other guy had a torch burning on his head. They were on stilts.

Scariest movie: Texas Chainsaw Massacre (the original. even though it didn't really happen as they say in the beginning. That was (Ed Gein)

Halloween is for: never having to say you're scary
What scares me: gray suits with blue ties and

gray hair on TV talking about what they decide for the rest of us.

THE GOD AWFULS

KEVIN DEFRANCO/ SINGER-THE GOD AWFULS

My scariest Halloween experience: When I was 12 years old, I was jumped by two cholos who stole my candy and my brand new XJ-900's. Damn.... those were sweet kicks too.

Top three items I'd love to see in my trick or treat bag: Marisa Tomei's Underpants, Winona Rider's underpants and a Coke to wash them down with.

What band scares me the most/why: ANY band where the lead singer sounds like he's 12 when he's 27, and is accompanied by another guy who sounds like a dying screamo jaguar. SEE ALSO: the legions and legions of floppy-banged, Express men's eunics that adore them.

Best costume I have ever witnessed: I don't know. I play in a punk band.... I see way too many of them to choose just one.

Scariest movie: Taxi Driver...but only when you start relating WAAAY too much.

Halloween is for: getting to see your friends' girlfriends all tarted up. and of course, killing.

What scares me: This new age of Disco we're living in. Re-animated corpses. And the fact that Winona Rider may be a Skratz reader and I may have just blown my chances with her.....

UNDERMINDED

NICK (LEAD SINGER/GUITARIST)

My scariest Halloween experience: Getting candy corn in my trick or treat bag. It's disgusting, shut up.

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: Condoms,

Tequila, and razor blades in my candy.

What band scares me the most/why: Hawthorne Heights. Those dudes wax their eyebrows, and that scares me.

Best costume I have ever witnessed: I once saw a band on Halloween back in '99 and the guitarist was dressed in a homemade carrot outfit. But no one knew what the fuck he was.

Scariest movie: "North" with Elijah Wood.

Halloween is for: the kids who shop at Hot Topic to have a day off from getting their asses beat in school.

What scares me: Myspace.. and Hawthorne Heights.

ONSET RECORDS / SUPERNOVICE

DAVID TURBOW / FOUNDER

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: All the expensive little gizmos that I don't have and don't know how to use...an ipod, a digital camera, and a blackberry.

What band scares me the most/why: The Residents in their dancing

Eyeball video you know, the one where they had canes and white tuxedos. It's like a bad acid trip.

Best costume I have ever witnessed: The couple from Something About Mary. The guy dressed as Ben Stiller (from the prom date scene- with fake braces and fake cum dripping from his ear. Uh, at least I think that it was fake cum)

Scariest movie: The Ring

Halloween is for: Pagans of all ages getting half naked. Any others who like to have some early Fall fun.

IMPALED

ROSS SEWAGE/BASSIST

My scariest Halloween experience: The time I watched two ultra-scary Halloween episode of Beans Baxter, teen secret agent

What band scares me the most/why: The Black Eyed Peas... I'm scared to think people actually listen to them voluntarily.

Best costume I have ever witnessed: the fat Optimus Prime guy
Scariest movie: Night of the Living Dead
Halloween is for: Poisoning children or mutilating them with razor blades in apples
What scares me: Carol Channing in a slinky white teddy

THE VALLEY ARENA

WARREN WOODWARD/VOICE AND GUITAR

My scariest Halloween experience: Every year growing up, my mother would "buy" all of our candy from us for \$5. We never got to eat a damn piece of it!!! (She's a dental hygienist looking out for her kids' cavities, bless her sweet heart, but Goddamn were we mad...)

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: Sleeping Pills, Rolo's, and a wish.
What band scares me the most/why: The Last Man of the 9th Michigan Infantry. The sound like the apocalypse and break all their gear after every song. They are also my favorite band in the universe right now.

Best costume I have ever witnessed: Myself as "dirt" last year.

Scariest movie: Basket Case (A man carries his mutant siamese twin - essentially a blob with fangs and little arms - around in a basket, which said blob occasionally leaves for purposes of raping and murdering).

What scares me: The review Skrtch gave our last record.

INDEX CASE

NICK BORROR/BASSIST

My scariest Halloween experience: One Halloween I actually died

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: Reese's Peanut Butter Eggs, a Miller High Life and 10,000 screaming fans.

What band scares me the most/why: Nickelback for obvious reasons.

Best costume I have ever witnessed: Han Solo frozen in carbonite.

Scariest movie: Original Texas Chainsaw Massacre.

Halloween is for: lovers.

What scares me: Again, Nickelback.

SKRTCH MAGAZINE

SUE LOPEZ/ CONDUCTOR OF CHAOS

My scariest Halloween experience: When I was about 10, my grandpa decided to go in the backyard and jump at the window of the room I was in. The scary part was that I was convinced that Dracula lived back there and he pops up in a Dracula costume. Yes, I did pee in my pants. Scared me for life.

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: Three Musketeers bars, vibrator, and flea powder (for my dog)

What band scares me the most/why: Marilyn Manson but almost in a good way. He's not sure if he's woman or man. It's funny.

Best costume I have ever witnessed: Batman
Scariest movie: The Ring...that chick that comes out of the well/TV scares the shit out of me.

Halloween is for: Having an excuse to dress like whore without anyone saying anything to me.

What scares me: Bobble heads.

GATSBY'S AMERICAN DREAM

KIRK HUFFMAN/BASS

What band or artist scares me the most/why: R. Kelly, does that have to be explained?

Scariest movie: Teletubbies and the Magic Pumpkin.

Halloween is for: teenage girls to have an excuse to dress like tramps.

What scares me: Karl Rove, Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld shooting the shit over happy hour

drinks at Applebee's.

GET OUTTA TOWN RECORDS / MAKE OR BREAK

CHARLES CHAUSSINAND, OWNER AND GUITAR PLAYER

My scariest Halloween experience: Halloween Horror Nights at Universal Studios in Orlando, my girlfriend and I saw a teenage boy with breasts larger than Chesty Morgan's.

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: Candy without gelatin, apples and Payday bars.

What band scares me the most/why: Nerve Agents because they are one of the best hardcore bands ever while wearing eyeliner and being into scary shit.

Best costume I have ever witnessed: I would have to say one I had. When I was four, I was dressed as a dinosaur in a costume that my mom SEWED BY HAND and it was probably the most detailed thing ever.

Scariest movie: Evil Dead

What scares me: George Bush

AMESTORY

MIKE RUSSELL

My scariest Halloween experience: I dressed up as a woman four years ago for Halloween. After spending a few hours dressed as the opposite sex, I came to the realization that I was actually a woman trapped inside a man's body, and now I am actually a full-blown cross-dresser everyday of my life.

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: Smarties, Tootsie Rolls and Snickers bars with razor blades hidden inside.

What band scares me the most/why: GG Allen. For obvious reasons.

Best costume I have ever witnessed: I saw this little kid who was no older than 6 years old who painted his face and hands black and said he was Steve Urkel.

LAWNCHAIR RECORDS

LARS LAING-PETERSON / OWNER

My scariest Halloween experience: I haven't had anything really scary happen... I dressed up as a Catholic schoolgirl one year with an afro - and my sister did my make-up, and apparently that was pretty scary. And that was the second year I dressed up as a woman - and if I wasn't so secure with myself, that could be a pretty scary thing.

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: an iPod (I am sick of all the cool kids having them and I don't), my old cell phone (I used to have the nicest Ericsson phone in Sweden, and now I have this piece of shit - and for whatever reason it still bugs me), and a Scooby Doo stuffed animal... but, I would really just be fine with a handful of candy corn.

What band scares me the most/why: Broken Social Scene... they are so talented. Talent scares me. And so does sexiness.

What scares me: The fact that Bush was re-elected. That the thought of a black or female president scares the United States...

VALIENT THORR

VALIENT HIMSELF, & EIDAN THORR

My scariest Halloween experience: too much earth acid, pumpkin soup and homemade wine does not equal a good Halloween party. Try vomiting up some concoction of the three, and then totally embarrassing yourself in front of all of your earth friends, and THEIR families, then freaking out, and seeing blood on the TV screen then on the walls after watching ten minutes of "Passenger 57". Bad scene.

Best costume I have ever witnessed: home-made storm trooper... Jake Thorr was pretty convincing as Bill the Butcher from Gangs of New York.

Scariest movie: Frailty. That shit can really happen. Jesus freaks, could actually kill people in the name of the lord. We are scared of religious fanatics now.

What scares me: shows like the OC, and that dudes are really into shit like that. Horrible.

EMERY

DEVIN/ SINGER/GUITARIST

My scariest Halloween experience: Once at a college Halloween party, I met Satan.

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: Sour Brite crawlers, pepperoni pizza and a picture of my lady (that earns some serious points)
What band scares me the most/why: Stun because one of the percussionist can look into your soul with his eyes.

Best costume I have ever witnessed: once I was incredible hulk

Scariest movie: The exorcism of Emily Rose
Halloween is for: The devil and his minions

What scares me: Crazy kids

EARACHE RECORDS

BRYAN BASSANO/ US PUBLICIST

My scariest Halloween experience: Running from the police in 7th Grade after egging my teacher's house.

Best costume I have ever witnessed: A dude who wore an actual Queen size mattress over his body

Scariest movie: The Exorcist

Halloween is for: Fun, Scares, and Treats

What scares me: The future

CENTURY MEDIA

HEATHER SMITH - PUBLICIST

My scariest Halloween experience: When I was in 1st grade I came home from school and my mom jumped out from behind the front door after I closed it. She chased me and pinned down with a knife, raised it high above her head and stabbed me. Only after she stabbed me did I realize that it was a rubber knife. What the hell was she thinking chasing down a 7 year old with a knife rubber or not? No wonder I'm so sick in the head.

Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag: Spa Passes, 2 tickets to paradise and a candy necklace

What band scares me the most/why: The Polyphonic Spree Orchestra, I don't even want to know what drugs they take.

Best costume I have ever witnessed: A couple dressed in green overalls passing out green tortilla chips with Soilent Green stenciled on their pockets and across their backs.

Scariest movie: Candyman - I couldn't look in the mirror for days after watching that movie.
Halloween is for: Sick twisted individuals just like me.

What scares me: White males with short hair and glasses aka Jeffrey Dahmer.

I ROCK ENTERTAINMENT

MONTE "BIG WIG" MALONE

My scariest Halloween experience: Back in the 80's a guy dressed like Jason attacked me and my cool friends with a running chainsaw... He would not stop chasing use so we ran like lil bitches to the security of some old lady's porch and we were saved!

Best costume I have ever witnessed:

That dude on the internet that dresses like Peter Pan 24/7

Halloween is for: Parties, fog machines, strobe lights, and feeling up French maids.

What scares me: Chicks...

BLACKHEART RECORDS/ THE VACANCIES

CARI LAGUNA

My scariest Halloween experience: being stranded in the woods.**Top three items I'd love to see in my trick or treat bag:** Ipod Nano, a bag of money and Skratz magazine.**What band scares me the most:** Simple Plan
Best Costume I have ever witnessed: Bill Clinton & Monica Lewinsky**Scariest movie:** The Exorcist**What scares me:** Rap metal

DAIMON

THERESA/ GUITAR

My scariest Halloween experience: Grown men electrocuting their balls at a Halloween party 2 years ago.**Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag:** A used syringe (with cap on...don't want to poke myself) because it'd just be outstanding to see, a million dollars in unmarked bills to spend on my family, band mates and to make some sort of a difference somewhere. anywhere and 3 plane tickets to New Zealand so my band mates and I can finally take a vacation!**What band scares my the most/why:** BackStreet Boys (if you call that a band) because of their larger than life egos / Gwar because they aesthetically remind me of me and my band mates insides. Self-reflection is hard to take.**Best costume I have ever witnessed:** A SIX FOOT (+) TALL EJACULATING PENIS**Scariest movie:** From Justin To Kelly (American Idol)**Halloween is for:** Lovers**What scares me:** Brittany Spears

HAM1

JIM WILLINGHAM/GUITARS, SONGS

My scariest Halloween experience: When I was in second grade, back in the heyday of 70's drug culture, I was in a Halloween parade. My mom made me this hairy-rug gorilla costume. It looked ridiculous. We were parading by the high school and all these high school stoners started honking the nose of my mask and laughing. I'll never forget it. It was a little traumatizing.**Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag:** tube socks, new toothbrush and toenail clippers.**What band scares me the most/why:** Maybe if there was a band with Celine Dion, Bette Midler, and Barbara Streisand singing simultaneously. Why? I don't know. Just picture it in your head.**Best costume I have ever witnessed:** Curtis P. did a dead on Vic Chestnut one year. He's also done Osama Bin Laden and a Catholic priest with lotion on his hands.**Scariest movie:** Three Men and a Baby. Not only was it god awful but there was also apparently a real ghost on the set.**Halloween is for:** Immature grownups. It's my favorite holiday.**What scares me:** Ralph Reed. He's like a real-life Damien Omen.

BURNSIDE PROJECT

RICHARD JANKOVICH

My scariest Halloween experience: when I was younger, my mother made me a costume which I was required to wear to school. when I got to school, the other children laughed at me. you see, it wasn't a costume at all. my mother sent me to school naked and bruised. it also wasn't Halloween. it was my birthday.**Best costume I have ever witnessed:** Willem Dafoe.**Halloween is for:** lovers.**What scares me:** daddy at 2am with vodka breath.

JAMISONPARKER

JAMISON

My scariest Halloween experience: my scariest experience is a story that I'd rather not share... but I will say that it included beheaded animals, a half dozen weirdo's in a graveyard, an open casket on some railroad tracks, and me running for my life. You can use that information to concoct any story that you please... I bet you couldn't, in a million years, put one together anything close to as terrible as what I really saw.**Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag:** in nopractical order of importance.... talent, inspiration, and a good reason to get out of bed every day. Actually I take the "talent" part back... replace that with an almond joy... nobody needs talent for anything anymore, that's being proven as I write this.**What band scares me the most/why:** pretty much everything released in the past couple of years makes me want to fucking vomit.... why? watch a music video station or listen to the radio.... do I really need to say more?**Best costume I have ever witnessed:** about four months ago I realized that I have a serious identity crisis.... read into that.**Scariest movie:** Requiem for a Dream.**What scares me:** there's not enough space to attempt that list.

BULLET TRAIN TO VEGAS

DAN SENA SINGER/GUITARIST

My scariest Halloween experience: Probably when I was a kid. It was the first year they did Knott's Scary Farm and the Mine Train across from the Log Ride was set up as a haunted train ride or something. Halfway through, they had these dudes dressed up as ghosts that stood along side the train and grabbed people. I wasn't even paying attention and one of them grabbed me. I nearly pissed myself. When you're 5 years old, stuff like that leaves an impression. It was a couple years before I went on that ride again.**Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag:** a unlimited gift certificate to pay off my debt, lots of king sized Snickers and keys to a new car.**What band scares me the most/why:** Obviously any jock hardcore band or affiliates that go around beating up people for no good reason. Who the hell doesn't want to go to a show for fear of being beaten up.**Best costume I have ever witnessed:** My friend Jaime dressed up as Gene Frenkle, the Cowbell player from the Blue Oyster Cult.**Scariest movie:** Pet Cemetery**Halloween is for:** Pagans**What scares me:** Shitty people and Neo-Cons.

ANTI-SOCIAL MUSIC, THE HOLD

STEADY, WORLD/INFERNO FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY

FRANZ NICOLAY, MAN-ABOUT-TOWN

My scariest Halloween experience: watching an effigy in a white tux go up in flames in a Brooklyn backstreet, while high on Israeli ecstasy.**What band scares me the most/why:** Granola Funk Express. Never heard them, but Jesus, come on.**Best costume I have ever witnessed:** fire-breather naked but for black tux-tails. A couple in orange jumpsuits with stars of David on each chest, orange Jews.**Scariest movie:** She's All That**What scares me:** daddy longlegs...those things shouldn't be.

THE DOLLYROTS

KELLY O/ VOX & BASS

My scariest Halloween experience: literally running into my 6th grade math teacher in bad drag.**Top three items I live to see in my trick or treat bag:** chocolates, poison apples, & anything home-

made.

What band scares me the most/why: Metallica, they make my stomach hurt.**Best costume I have ever witnessed:** dominatrix milkmaid with her submissive cow.**Scariest movie:** The Wizard of Oz**Halloween is for:** all the spooky kids to get a years worth of clothes. And toys.**What scares me:** too much whiskey.

ADOLESCENTS, MANIC HISPANIC, PRK,

STEVE SOTO

My scariest Halloween experience: I Went to a Halloween party at Geza X's house I was 16. I went with the Agnew brothers. Half the party was in costume the other half were your usual Hollywood "art" crowd.. anyway ... We meet these "girls" and they had booze and were sharing it with us and telling us what nice little boys we were and being very touchy feely which was ok because at that point we were totally ready to be taken advantage of by "older women" ... at some point I take a hard look and realize that my new friend had an adams apple just like me and her hands were twice as big as mine ... Frank and I hightailed it right back to Fullerton...**Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag:** Elmer's glue, a copy of American Graffiti and a Louie blue raspberry Otter Pop**What band scares me the most/why:** The Partridge Family ... first off ...who want to be in a band with their mom... the whole concept is frightening.**Best costume I have ever witnessed:** Alex Hernandez owner of Alex's bar as Col. Saunders he looked so cool it almost made me crave genetically altered chicken..**Scariest movie:** The Exorcist**Halloween is for:** Glen Danzig**What scares me:** rodeo clowns

NINJA HIGH SCHOOL

GREGORY COLLINS

My scariest Halloween experience: That time we egged Old Man Cooze's place and he came running out with a pitbull on a leash in one hand and a .303 in the other.**Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag:** Twizzlers, gummi bears and apples with razor blades in 'em**What band scares me the most/why:** The massive popularity of Wolf Parade makes me fear that my generation is even drearier than I had imagined.**Scariest movie:** CUJO. Hands down. Why? Unlike other horror films, which ham-fistedly rely on an appeal to the fantastic, Cujo wins because of its extreme PLAUSIBILITY.**Halloween is for:** fiddling while Rome burns.**What scares me:** Peak oil and the incipient destruction of global civilization.

REIGNITION RECORDINGS

ROSS SIEGEL, PRESIDENT

My scariest Halloween experience: I was stoned when I was 16 and I saw the wicked witch of the east and she scared the shit out of me. I think she was a he.**Top three items I'd live to see in my trick or treat bag:** Squirt guns, shaving cream with the nozzle melted so it shoots far fast and lots of fruity-flavored Tootsie Rolls (way better than the choco tootsies)**What band scares my the most/why:** I seriously feel that the Sex Pistols were the most dangerous band of all time given the time period, the context, the musical environment, and the political climate of Thatcher-era England.**Best costume I have ever witnessed:** A husband and wife were mustard and ketchup bottles. My dog was once a ladybug.**Halloween is for:** birthday parties. Oct. 31st will be my 28th birthday.**What scares me:** Spiders, cockroaches and pit bulls.

BEWARE THE CHUPACABRA

By Matt Wallace

Whilst on a Friday evening stroll with some chums, wandering the avenues of a college neighborhood, giddy from copious sips from a jug of cheap (and thus toxic) red wine, we mutually agreed to rent a movie. It follows, then, that we ventured to that gaudy blue and yellow bastion of American stupidity, Blockbuster, in search of a film to entertain and edify our collegiate intellects.

Our search, much like the legendary quest for the Holy Grail, failed miserably, and henceforth must be recorded in published lore for the remainder of the human race's dwindling tenure on our humble (but pissed off) little planet.

And so, we entered with drunken pomp and enthusiasm, convinced we would chance upon a film that might appease us as we sobered up. A foreign film, perhaps an independent film, maybe even a mainstream flick that somehow managed to wriggle free from the icy grip of the slick corporate vampires. You know, the plastic-surgery enhanced creatures that feast on the blood of ambitious artists of all stripes, and then refine the surplus blood into a mysterious substance they use to fuel their European luxury coupes. Trust me on that last part, especially all you aspiring young musicians who may one day find yourselves tempted by the offer of a contract from a major record label. Refuse any such agreement, for your blood will be drained and pumped into the Mercedes of some rich asshole with a gray ponytail.

Digression aside, it's needless to say that we did not find any movies that would slake our thirst for enlightenment and entertainment. So we'd have to settle merely for entertainment and forego enlightenment. Life is all about compromise, or so I'm told. So what film did we choose? Did we pick among the great directors of the twentieth century: Bergman, Scorsese, Fellini, Truffaut? No. Blockbuster doesn't carry those, with a few exceptions, like Truffaut's 400 BLOWS or TAXI DRIVER. I'll grant them that. But now I must confess which film we actually rented (for free, mind you—Blockbuster was sued recently, if you recall, and we came armed with free rental vouchers from the resulting settlement). Few of you have seen this movie, and I hope those of you who haven't never will. The very word strikes fear into Blockbuster patrons the country over, not to mention all those Mexican and Central American villagers and who find their goats mysteriously mutilated and drained of blood: CHUPACABRA.

The chupacabra, as everyone knows, often appears as a scaly lizard-like creature with quills running down its spine, approximately three to four feet in height, and moves by hopping or even leaping great distances, kind of like a kangaroo, but way cooler, because, you know, it's a chupacabra. Its head looks canine, with sharp teeth, it hisses and screeches when confronted, and often leaves a nasty sulfuric odor in its wake.

The film, CHUPACABRA, however, did not faithfully represent the generally accepted scientific data and eyewitness accounts that tidily classify the goat-sucking beast.

I'm being facetious, by the way, if you didn't catch

that. What does facetious mean, you ask? Get a dictionary. That's not my job, damn it. Learn something, will you? Jesus.

Moving on: chupacabras do not look like a short guy in a costume purchased at one of those seasonal Halloween stores that open around early September and close in early November. Second of all, chupacabras do not kill and feed on the blood of humans, particularly washed up porn stars that will appear in films such as CHUPACABRA to pay the next month's rent for their dingy studio apartments or to support a cocaine habit.

Some who have seen the chupacabra say that its red eyes can induce hypnosis and paralysis; but as far as I can tell, all they can do is bore you to death or incite laughter the film adaptation of this silly folk myth certainly doesn't intend. And according to the film, they aren't exactly the best hunters, either: during one extended chase sequence, in which the chupacabra pursues a victim on crutches across a fenced backyard perhaps no greater than twenty feet in width, the victim manages to elude the clumsy costumed guy's supposedly deadly clutch for quite some time, despite the cripple's inability to lumber along much faster than a strung-out tortoise.

The movie did emphasize one important thing for me, though, as I began to sober up and the movie's convoluted non-plot came to some sort of resolution, and subsequently ended on a set-up for a sequel (which, I pray to God, will never, ever, EVER be produced). It reminded me that we should not fear chupacabras—no, we have a much more dangerous, insidious, goat-sucking predator that stalks us day and night. That predator is American stupidity.

It stalks us from the shelves of Blockbuster franchises, seemingly harmless shape shifters like straight-to-DVD horror movies and soft-core porn. It lurks on the shelves of your local (and vaguely fascist) Barnes & Noble, assuming the deceptively non-threatening form of paperbacks with raised lettering, and row upon frightening row of worthless self-help books. Its ghostly image appears before us on movie screens and flickers on our televisions, twenty-four hours a day, pacifying us with canned jokes, laugh tracks advertisements, and predictable plots. It lies in wait on the CD racks at Best Buy, luring us into its salivating jaws with corporate-approved lullabies. It encourages us to believe that terrorists are out to get us, that McDonald's hamburgers actually taste good, and that, hey, racism, sexism, nationalism, homophobia, age discrimination, fossil fuels, Rupert Murdoch, and Twinkies are all cool.

Okay, maybe Twinkies don't count. Twinkies don't control the American media with despotic fanaticism like Rupert Murdoch, but they will make you fat if you eat too many of them.

All the same, we might be able to escape the grip of an actor in a bad Halloween costume, unlike the hilariously murdered characters of the fictional chupacabra in the movie that bears the creature's silly name, the type of people who apparently can't outsmart a guy in a mask without eyeholes. But finding cultural and intellectual fulfillment in modern America is a considerably more difficult, and terrifying, prospect. And unfortunately, our chupacabras—cable TV news, pop culture, evangelical Christians, and so on—don't have to wear silly costumes and masks without eyeholes. Okay, sometimes they wear silly costumes. Have you seen some of these evangelical Christian types? Yikes.

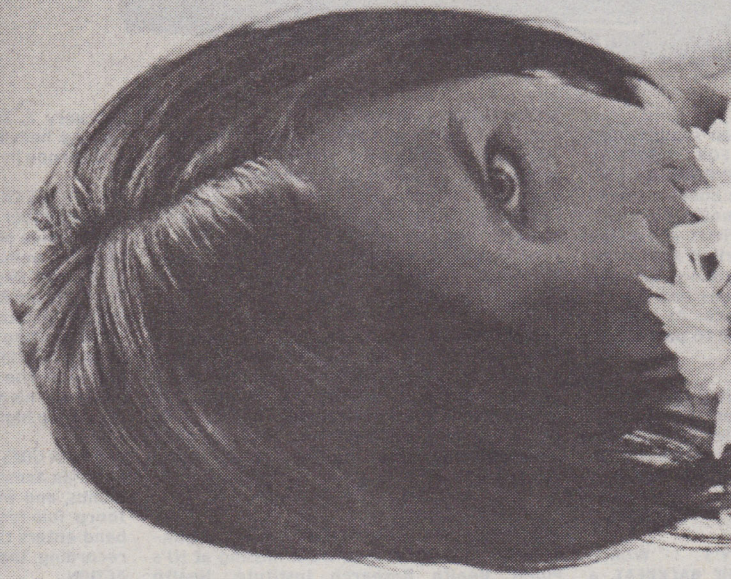
So, then, fear not the chupacabra—unless he stalks you from his perch on a new release shelf at Hollywood Video. Then, please, for Christ's sake, run—and hope that it won't all be in vain. And if anyone is looking for a specific place to run, you can probably find me in a socialist Northern European nation where the scariest thing around is Norwegian death metal.

wake in

free condoms

love carefully

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Planned Parenthood®
Orange and San Bernardino Counties



THE NEWS

FRESH AFTER ALL THESE YEARS

Dead Kennedys will reissue their seminal 1980 debut **FRESH FRUIT FOR ROTTING VEGETABLES** SPECIAL 25TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION (Manifesto Records) with bonus material October 25. The "extras" amount to a 55-minute DVD with new interviews about the record and some of the earliest known live footage of DKs performing at San Francisco's Mabuhay Gardens and during their only live date in France. As may be expected, Jello Biafra declined to participate in the project.

IT'S THE RAMONES WORLD WE JUST LIVE IN IT On September 16, a museum dedicated entirely to The Ramones opened in Berlin. Drummer Marky Ramone said it "could be the first of many," adding, "just because it's in Berlin, it doesn't mean there can't be one in New York, L.A., or London. It's wonderful. I'm flattered."

...MAKE THAT MARKY'S WORLD Marky's finishing **FAITH IN THE BACKBEAT**, a book about his "times with the punk rock scene in New York...[from] my audition with the New York Dolls all the way up to the Ramones' Rock and Roll Hall of Fame [induction]." Moreover, the drummer has a new show airing Thursday nights between 10 p.m. and midnight on Sirius Satellite Radio channel 28. The station is called "Faction," and he'll DJ live, playing live, rare, and archival Ramones material, as well as contemporary punk, and music that inspired The Ramones.

LOOSE NUT

Multi-media man Henry Rollins, who previously hosted IFN's **HENRY'S FILM CORNER**, is tackling a new project for IFN called **THE HENRY ROLLINS SHOW**, which will be a wide-ranging talk show. IFN ordered a 20-episode run of the series for its first season.

NO REST FOR BAD RELIGION

Fresh off their European tour, L.A.'s punk icons Bad Religion have announced dates (with Pennywise and Anti-Flag) in the U.S. in support of 2004's stellar **THE EMPIRE STRIKES FIRST**. In addition, the DVD of their fall 2004 performance at the Palladium will be released January 18 on Epitaph.

DOCUMENTARY FOR JOHN

A documentary about John Lennon's transformation into an antiwar activist started pre-production, and aims to reach theaters next year, according to Lions Gate Films. Entitled **THE U.S. VS. JOHN LENNON**, it'll be released to coincide with the thirtieth anniversary of the rock icon being granted permanent U.S. residency, despite the government's strong efforts to prevent it.

SHOCK TROOPS

October sees TKO releasing a brand-new DVD from U.K. Oi!/punk legends Cock Sparrer. Just a modicum of what **WHAT YOU SEE... IS WHAT YOU GET** contains: the Morecambe, England 2003 gig, interviews, U.S. 2000 tour footage, band documentary, music videos, and complete discography.

THE BLACK DEATH

Three mice infected with the bacteria responsible for bubonic plague went missing at NJ's Public Health Research Institute. Health experts claimed the public wasn't at risk, for even if they DID get outside the lab, they would've died early on from the disease. Federal officials said they'd probably never be accounted for. Bubonic plague is believed to have caused several epidemics or pandemics throughout history, but today can be treated with antibiotics.

PMS AT ABACUS

Denver's Planes Mistaken for Stars have joined the Abacus roster, and their next full-length will come out June 6 (the band's old home, No Idea, will do the vinyl). This from the band: "Abacus are good eggs and if anyone has a problem with any of this start your own band or eat shit; either way try and have fun with it."

TECHNOCRATIC MANIPULATORS

VOIVOD-D-V-O-D-1, the first DVD from highly-influential Canadian thrash behemoths Voivod, comes out October 25, and covers the original line-up period (1983-1991). Included are all the '80's videos, plus rare live and studio performances.

BIGWIG UPDATE

Fearless Records has reported that the next Bigwig album will be released

February 7, 2006. The band are planning on touring heavily throughout the U.S., Canada, and Europe in support.

HAIL TO THE CHIEF

On September 29, John Roberts was sworn in as chief justice of the Supreme Court. Last month he was nominated to take the seat left vacant by Sandra Day O'Connor, but after presiding chief William Rehnquist died early-September, Bush nominated Roberts for the top spot. After bitter battling that led to a confirmation by the Senate Judiciary Committee, Roberts was confirmed by the Senate (78-22). Bush has yet to announce his nomination for the second opening on the high court.

ONE MAN GOES THE WAY OF THE BOMBS

One Man Army's Jack Dalrymple has joined U.S. Bombs, and will be playing bass on their new Thorp full-length due out March 2006. The band enters the studio mid-October to begin recording their follow-up to 2003's **COVERT ACTION**.

THE DANCE REVOLUTION CONTINUES...

Brien Worsham, former- AND now-current vocalist for NC's Secret Lives of the Freemasons, has RE-joined the band after UN-joining a mere week prior. The guys resumed their normal touring schedule, supporting **THIS WAS BUILT TO MAKE YOU DANCE** (Astro Magnetix), as if nothing ever happened. In reaction, label owner Marc Debiak announced plans to find a used Sega Genesis at a garage sale that'll work with an old copy of **MADDEN 96** he found in his mom's basement. "I can't be bothered with all this band drama," stated Debiak, "not when I still have half an iced tea to drink."

HOT WATER TRIO

No Idea has released the infamous Hot Water Music/Alkaline Trio split EP on an LP picture disc featuring two new original paintings by Scott Sinclair. (Viddy the artwork here: http://www.noidearecords.com/images/hwm_alk.gif.) The split was originally released in 2002 (on CD only by Jade Tree Records) and features each band covering each other's tunes.

AMERICAN DREAMERS

China's excellent street punk quartet Brain Failure hit the road October with Street Dogs and River City Rebels in support of AMERICAN DREAMER. See www.brainfailure.com. Also, BF will have a few tracks on the AMPED 3 snowboarding video game for X Box along with Thorp label-mates The Ducky Boys.

IGNITE RECORDING

Having recently returned from their European headlining tour, SoCal hardcore/punk band Ignite are preparing to enter the studio to record their third full-length (and first for Abacus) in the middle of October with Cameron Webb (Motorhead, Silverstein).

Q: AND CHILDREN? A: AND CHILDREN

Finland's Children Of Bodom release their fifth album, ARE YOU DEAD YET? (Spinefarm), October 25, and the U.S. release includes a previously-unreleased bonus track. Along with the nine new studio tracks, COB also include a cover of The Ramones' "Somebody Put Something in My Drink".

YES, WE STILL CARE!

November 1 marks the release of Face to Face's drool-inducing career retrospective SHOOT THE MOON: THE ESSENTIAL COLLECTION. Released on frontman Trevor Keith's new label Antagonist, the record contains 19 of their greatest songs PLUS two new recordings and an extensive 28-page booklet featuring in-depth liner notes and rare photos. The noteworthy band formed in '91 and officially broke up in '03 (but played their farewell tour in '04).

SAN DIEGO'S BEST

At the fifteenth-annual San Diego Music Awards, As I Lay Dying were voted Artist of the Year, beating out such bands as Unwritten Law and Louix XIV. Said vocalist Tim Lambesis, "This award was truly a surprise! It would be one thing if the judges in some musical academy chose us, but this award means so much because it comes from our fans."

SAN DIEGO'S BEST, PART DEUX

Underminded won Best Hard Rock Band at the San Diego Music Awards, but they don't rest on their laurels, as they're still touring on HAIL UNAMERICAN! and working hard.

COPELAND AIN'T TOO SHABBY, EITHER

Copeland was named Breakthrough Artist in Yahoo Music's "Who's Next?" competition, taking 45 percent of the vote and defeating Silverstein, Daniel Powter, and Steven Strait. They're currently touring on their latest album IN MOTION (The Militia Group), with Daphne Loves Derby, Melee, and the Spill Canvas until November 7. www.thecopeland-site.com

SO MUCH FOR THE EXHUMATION

Legendary '80s horror punk band 45 Grave were to be on tour after a 15-year hiatus, with original vocalist Dinah Cancer and an all-star new lineup. They had even played a CBGB's benefit show prior to their scheduled jaunt with The Misfits. However, shortly after the announcement, the band pulled out because of booking agent problems. Fear not, though, they're seeking to pursue other touring opportunities and plan to explore possibilities of new CD releases.

THE MILITIA GROUP SIGNINGS

Indie-pop five-piece fielding, who've opened for such acts as Sleater Kinney, Glenn Tillbrook (of Squeeze), and Quasi, signed with The Militia Group. The band are holding down a month-long residence at the Silverlake Lounge and look to release their self-titled debut October 18. Also new to the label: The Class of 98, who will be releasing TOUCH THIS AND DIE early 2006.

SUPERJOINT'S COMMISERATION

Superjoint Ritual was able to make it out of New Orleans safely prior to the devastation of hurricane Katrina. The band wishes the best for family, friends, and fellow citizens of the city who have experienced loss due to Katrina.

DEATH BY AVENGENCE

Following headlining tour dates through Canada and a support stint through North America with PENNYWISE, Death by Stereo (supporting their latest album DEATH FOR LIFE) will take to the road as main support for Avenged Sevenfold, now through December 2. www.epitaph.com

REBELS WITH A CAUSE

Even Hurricane Katrina couldn't drown the spirit of New Orleans. But the survivors needed help, and nothing brings the underground community together like fellow rebels in need. Hence, a benefit show was performed September 25 at the Galaxy Theatre. For "Rebels with a Cause," New Orleans native Timbo Gruse and his band Speedbuggy USA were joined by Rory Justice, The Moonlight Cruisers, The Rocketz, The Henchmen, Crash Cadillacs, and The Southerners, to name a few.

FIND OUT WHAT'S ON JOE ESCALANTE'S MIND

Vandals bassist/Kung Fu Records major domo Joe Escalante has updated his tour diary (www.kungfurecords.com/html/foesreport.htm) and promises that with his handy sidekick he'll keep updating it with upcoming Vandals and Sweet and Tender Hooligans (the band Escalante just joined up with) shows.

YEAH, IT'S CHEAP FUEL, BUT...DEAD CATS?

Christian Koch told Germany's BILD newspaper his organic diesel fuel comprising garbage and cat roadkill is a sound alternative to consumer diesel. "I drive my diesel-powered car with this mixture" and have had no problems, said the German. His patented "KDV 500" machine produces the "bio-diesel" fuel at about one-fifth the price at gas stations. Koch said 20 dead cats added into the mix could produce enough fuel to fill up a 50-litre (11 gallon) tank. The German Society for the Protection of Animals said there was no danger for cats, as this practice is illegal.

ENDANGERED SPECIESæWHO NEEDS 'EM?

The House (by a vote of 229-193) approved an overhaul of the 1973 Endangered Species Act, the nation's most powerful environmental law. The new bill (pushed by Rep. Richard Pombo, who says the rules of the original act burden landowners and lead to lawsuits while doing too little to save plants/animals) requires the government to compensate property owners if steps to protect species thwarts development plans. Also, it would stop the government from designating "critical habitat," which limits development. Still, there's hope, as Senate's approval isn't guaranteed.

NEW ON VICTORY

Victory Records is proud to announce the signing of two bands: The Autumn Offering (album out May '06) and Long Island's The Sleeping.

GHOST TOUR

In support of GHOST REVERIES, Sweden's Opeth embarked on the North American leg of their world tour October 9. They'll be here through mid-November, supported (on various dates) by Pelican, Nevermore, Fireball Ministry, and Into Eternity.

BLOODIED BUT UNBOWED

Four peace activists (and members of Catholic Worker), protesting the war in Iraq, were convicted September 26 for damaging governmental property when they spilled human blood on an American flag, but were acquitted of the most serious charge against them, conspiracy to impede an officer of the United States. They were also found guilty of entering

a military recruiting station for unlawful purposes when they splattered blood on the walls and windows of an Army and Marine Corps recruiting station near Ithaca, NY.

THE FILTH AND THE FURY

From October 19 until November 3, Toledo, OH's The Fury will be touring with The Juliana Theory, Jamison Parker, and June. Check www.thefurymusic.com for details.

BABY GOT BACK

Christian Slater took a plea deal allowing him to avoid jail time for grabbing a woman's derriere in NYC in May after an argument with a cab driver and then a girlfriend. The actor was charged with forcible touching, a misdemeanor. All charges have been dropped against Slater as long as he stays out of trouble for the next six months.

PLEDGE RULED UNCONSTITUTIONAL

The matter of reciting the Pledge of Allegiance in public schools might head back to the Supreme Court, as a federal judge declared it unconstitutional September 14. The case was raised by Michael Newdow, the atheist whose previous battle with the phrase "under God" was rejected in '04 by the Supreme Court (Newdow didn't have custody of his elementary school daughter on whose part he sued). This time, he filed the same case on behalf of three parents and their children.

CHANGE'LL DO YOU GOOD

A Change of Pace will be on the road from October 26 until December 15 with Greeley Estates and My American Heart on the MySpace Tour. www.achangeofpacemusic.com

LOSS OF BAND WITH SOCIAL CONSCIENCE

DC/Richmond-based Del Cielo have disbanded, playing their final show September 23. They'll be remembered as much for their two albums as well as their activism, as the band dedicated themselves to benefits, women's rights organizations, and political causes.

DECK THE HALLS

The Bouncing Souls give us ample reason to celebrate this season: they're releasing a double-disc live set of their greatest hits spanning their 15-year career entitled BOUNCING SOULS LIVE, as they begin to write their follow-up to 2003's ANCHORS AWAY (Eptiaph).

RIGHTEOUS

Righteous Jams (now on Broken Sounds Records) go on tour October 15 and will be jumping on the Dropkick Murphys tour beginning November 10. See www.kungfurecords.com/tourdates/tour-dates.htm for info.

KILLA DVD

Piebal's DVD, KILLA BROS & KILLA BEES will be released November 8, and it's filled with live footage and unreleased material. Also included is a CD of 17 unreleased B-sides.

15 MINUTES LATE FIND HOME

Chicago's 15 Minutes Late have signed with Fearless. They'll begin recording their debut LP with Sean O'Keefe (Hawthorne Heights, Fallout Boy) in November, and will tour immediately after. www.15minuteslate.com

THE NEWS was compiled by Janelle.

Email us in with your handy-dandy news at: skratchnews@hotmail.com. Read Skratchmagazine.com for more news.

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2.75" X 2.75"	\$15	\$23	\$46	\$92
5.5" X 1.75"	\$17	\$30	\$60	\$120
3.5" X 2"	\$15	\$25	\$50	\$100
7.5" X 2"	\$27	\$52	\$104	\$208
8.5" X 2.75"	\$34	\$61	\$122	\$144

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4.25" X 1.38"	\$31	\$53	\$106
4.25" X 2.75"	\$34	\$61	\$122
4.25" X 5.5"	\$84	\$160	\$295
2.75" X 2.75"	\$36	\$62	\$124
5.5" X 1.75"	\$42	\$68	\$136
5.5" X 2.75"	\$59	\$105	\$210
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4.25" X 4.25 1C	\$152	\$162	\$243
4.25" X 4.25 2C	\$226	\$241	\$361
2.75" X 2.75 1C	\$115	\$118	\$138
2.75" X 2.75 2C	\$171	\$175	\$205
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{ Interviews }



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FROM AUTUMN TO ASHES

By Carley Charpentier

Having just released their third album (ABANDON YOUR FRIENDS) and hosting MTV2's HEADBANGERS BALL, From Autumn to Ashes is currently in the spotlight—and is using their time there to relate to fans and make a difference. Before their show in Lawrence, KS, I was able to catch up with From Autumn to Ashes frontman Ben Perri via phone. Just a few days into their nationwide tour, Perri delves into the purpose behind their new album, their transition to MTV exposure, and politics.

SKRATCH: I understand that you're headlining this tour?

BP: Yes, that is correct.

SKRATCH: How are you liking that?

BP: It's our third day into the tour. We're just getting warmed up and getting into the swing of being on tour again. When we go on tour, we like to take bands that we know and like [...].

SKRATCH: It's got to feel great to headline a tour and know that the kids are there, for the most part, because of you.

BP: It's a great feeling. It's nice to see that what we do is appreciated. [...] But I would say that on the last few of the tours we've done, we've headlined.

SKRATCH: I know you've been quoted as saying that your previous two albums, THE FICTION WE LIVE and TOO BAD YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL, didn't have storylines; but I think it's safe to assume all of your work has a purpose or a message. What would you say the purpose of ABANDON YOUR FRIENDS is?

BP: Ummm, as a band, after the member change, we wanted to prove that we could still write good music and that we're still From Autumn to Ashes. We've matured as a band, and we understand the role we have in people's lives. What we write about in the songs the kids will take to heart. This [album] was more personal, though. We took what we were feeling and put it into songs. We're trying to show the kids that it's not easy to do what we do. It's a battle.

"WE'RE TRYING TO SHOW THE KIDS THAT IT'S NOT EASY TO DO WHAT WE DO. IT'S A BATTLE."

SKRATCH: Very cool. I realize that you guys do a lot of what you do and write the lyrics you write to relate to your fans, yet you say this one is a lot more personal. How so?

BP: For me, the lyrics I wrote were about how I was having a really tough time writing songs for this album. I think a lot of kids struggle with that and don't know how to express themselves. I want to show them that everyone has those problems. I'm

28 years old, and I still have to battle those problems.

SKRATCH: Definitely. So, of all the shows you're playing this time around, where are you looking forward to playing?

BP: On this tour, I'm looking forward to Pomona, San Antonio, and Nashville. Nashville is my favorite city in the country. I love the place. I love the people, the music, and everything about it. And we play there on my birthday—so I get to spend my birthday in my favorite place.

SKRATCH: That's awesome! So, you just did MTV2's HEADBANGERS BALL on Saturday! How was that?

BP: It was weird. None of us are morning people, and we had to be in there early Friday morning. Plus, they only told us two days before that we were hosting. So when we got in there, they gave us the script of what we were supposed to talk about—and we just read the script. I wish we would have had more time to talk about some other things. But it was alright.

SKRATCH: It's a big step for a lot of bands to move into the MTV world. How do you feel about that transition?

BP: I think it's great. It's good for the band to expose themselves a little more. It's cool for us, too. Plus, it's really cool for our parents. We have to make them realize that we're actually working, too.

SKRATCH: In a previous interview, you made a comment to the effect that you'll do anything to get a reaction out of people. Is that still the take you have?

BP: I think that interview was probably two years ago, if not more. I tend to not say some weird things anymore. Like I said, kids look up to us. I want to set a good example for people. And I'd like to get into politics someday, too.

SKRATCH: Politics? What are you looking into?

BP: I'm going back to school back in November. I'll be taking classes online to get my Bachelor's. I was at the Democratic National Convention, and there was a senator from Illinois, Barack Obama, who was the keynote speaker. There's a chance he'll run for president in 2012. I'd love to work on his campaign team.

SKRATCH: Awesome. Okay, in the same vein as politics is current events. We all know about the recent tragedy of Hurricane Katrina and what sort of devastation it caused. At this point, it seems like everyone is pointing fingers, even music artists. Recently, Kanye West spoke out against Bush in a very public forum. What did you think about that?

BP: I thought that his comment was correct but that he aired it in the wrong forum. [That wasn't] a place to air laundry like that. He could have waited to be on MTV or REGIS AND KELLY or something, some sort of better forum. I mean, he had a valid point, but I think that he needed to make it in a different arena. [...] He has a good argument, but the thing about the hurricane thing is that it's also the

people's fault.

SKRATCH: On the same hurricane note, it seems like that's all anyone is talking about right now. Do you think that the extensive coverage of the hurricane and its aftermath is necessary?

BP: There's a lot going on right now. The suspects of the London bombing were identified. John Roberts is in the confirmation process, and he's a younger guy who possibly lacks the experience necessary—and that's not being covered. Another seat in the Supreme Court is open [...] but that's floating under the radar. It's important to cover the news—all news. We have to be aware of what's going on and who's making decisions.

SKRATCH: Alright. Speaking of politics, I know you said that you would like to be a part of a campaign team, but would you yourself ever think about running for anything?

BP: I don't think so; I think I work better behind the scenes. I don't handle [being at] the forefront too well. I'd like to have a prominent position in the campaign...but, you know, that could change down the line.

SKRATCH: Recently it seems like musicians have jumped onto the political bandwagon—almost as though it's a trend. Why do you think that is? Do musicians like politics, or do people who like politics write music?

BP: I think it's a trend because of the "Fuck Bush" mentality. People like saying it because it's fun to say. I don't think people make informed decisions. [When they make decisions,] they need to know what they're doing and what people are going to do. I think that it's just a matter of people learning for themselves what's going on.

SKRATCH: So in your case, it's something that you just grew up knowing and wanted to get into?

BP: I've always been into it, ever since I was able to vote for the first time. It sucks that a lot of people our age aren't informed enough. They don't give a shit; they don't care. They need to know that what these people are doing is going to change our lives. You have to get involved. I'm not here to tell you. "Vote for a [Democrat or Republican]"—just make informed decisions about what's going to affect your life. I can tell you right now that if certain Republicans were to run, there are two who I would vote for—and I'm a Democrat. Just be informed.

SKRATCH: Right on. Is there anything else you want to inform SKRATCH readers about?

BP: Yeah: on August 30th the new record, ABANDON YOUR FRIENDS, came out. It's great. Buy it. Also, there's a new show called MY NAME IS EARL, and everyone has to watch that. Ummm, I know there's more—but that's all I can think of.

SKRATCH: [Laughs] Awesome. Well, thanks a bunch for taking the time to do this and enjoy the show!

BP: Will do. Thanks.

For more information on upcoming tour dates, check out www.FromAutumnToAshes.com.



This is *Come On, Feel it* by Baumer.

Okay, I know there are a lot of records to choose from in this magazine, but this one is clearly the best. Study the cover for a couple of minutes so you don't miss it when you're at the record store.

I'm sorry it isn't hardcore or emo. It definitely isn't screamo or post hardcore either (whatever those are). To be quite honest with you, it's kind of dancey and 80s like Duran Duran, Tears For Fears or A Flock of Seagulls. In fact, some people told me not to advertise it in here because *Skratch* readers wouldn't "get it".

But I have faith in you.

I think you can buy a super catchy, danceable album and possibly even find it a welcomed change to the pile of CDs on the floor of your car. So go to the store and buy *Come On, Feel It* by Baumer. Not because I told you to, but because America NEEDS you to."

- Marc Debiak, Owner, Astro Magnetix



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Against Me!
By Jennifer Swann

Back in '97, Tom Gabel began an acoustic one-man band. Eight years and more than 11 releases later, Tom is accompanied by James on guitar, Warren on drums, and Andrew on bass. Despite four or five different line-up changes, the name Against Me! has stuck and is more familiar now than ever. The folk-punk quartet has even been hailed as the messiah of punk rock.

Andrew Seward still thinks of himself the newest member of Against Me!—although he's been with the band for three-and-a-half years. When he joined the band, they started touring immediately and continue to spend more time on the road each year than most people travel in a lifetime. Against Me! have gained a considerable amount of popularity in the past few years. However, as Andrew observes, "For the longest time [...] it's always been about just getting in the van and going as far as you can and playing to whoever. We don't have a manifesto or a game plan; we're just four normal guys who are very lucky to be playing music together."

SKRATCH: How long have you guys been on this tour?

ANDREW: This actual 50-state tour we've only been on for...well, let's see...This is the sixth show, I think. But we played, like, three New York City CMJ shows before that, and we did our like nine-show tour before that. Basically, we're on tour all the time.

SKRATCH: So this is just the beginning leg of the tour right now.

ANDREW: Yeah. I think our last couple shows are in December 12th or 14th or something like that.

SKRATCH: Are you guys used to touring for this long of periods of time?

ANDREW: Yeah, yeah, yeah. We probably tour a total of 10 months out of a year, so we're used to it.

SKRATCH: Is there anything about touring that still really bothers you?

ANDREW: Not so much. I mean, you know, nobody's ever lied [and said] that they don't like sleeping in their own bed. Stuff like that. But we're really lucky to be doing this. We get to travel around everywhere, so I'm not complaining.

SKRATCH: What is the album title [SEARCHING FOR A FORMER CLARITY] a reference to?

ANDREW: I don't know. You have to...All of our stuff is...I know this is a total cop-out answer, but everything is open for you to interpret, you know what I mean? The songs are their own explanations. I mean, what do you think it means?

SKRATCH: Well, I haven't gotten a chance to listen to the whole album yet, but I know that one of the song titles is "Don't Lose Touch". What inspired you guys to write that song?

ANDREW: Well, it came about the way every other song came about: we just practice for a really long time. We probably took off three months straight, built a little like practice space in the bottom of Tom's garage, and practiced like five nights a week. It came together very tight, and we just fuckin' went for it. That's where "Don't Lose Touch" came from. Actually, we just started playing it, and we're like, "Oh, this is really catchy." And then it just became a song in probably 30 minutes.

SKRATCH: I heard Against Me! is opening up for Green Day in October?

ANDREW: Yeah—October 8th, something like that. At some little place, I'm sure.

SKRATCH: [Laughs] And you're playing on the Conan O'Brien show, too, right?

ANDREW: Yeah: it airs on Friday. We're going to New York City to film it on Monday. Playing on Conan is what I've wanted to do since I was like 18 years old. [...] He's the funniest guy on television.

SKRATCH: Are these types of things at all what "Don't Lose Touch" refers to? Is it hard to stay in touch with what's going on with the underground and DIY scene while playing with Green Day and being on TV? or do you feel like you've maintained a pretty good balance between the two?

ANDREW: Oh, I think we have an excellent balance. I mean, yeah, we're playing a show with Green Day and Conan O'Brien, but hell, that's two days out of 365. For 363, we're still doing exactly what we've always done: playing shows wherever, whenever. I think we're pretty balanced.

SKRATCH: What are some other dreams that you've accomplished so far?

ANDREW: Pretty much all of this shit I never thought I'd ever do, so it's really awesome that we've been doing it. This festival flew us over to Tokyo in March just to play one show. Stuff like that is amazing. We're very lucky to be doing this and having these opportunities. In July, we went over and played Iceland, Lithuania, Croatia, Serbia, Poland—all these countries (a lot of [which] used to be part of the U.S.S.R.). If

AGAINST ME!



...GONNA BE SPECTACULAR

you could rewind to like five years ago, there's no way in hell I'd ever think I'd be doing this.

SKRATCH: Would you say that the vibe from the audiences is the same everywhere? How does it differ in countries such as Japan?

ANDREW: Well, despite the fact that most of them don't speak English, it's really, really amazing to play somewhere like Germany or Tokyo and have people know the words. They're singing along just like if we were playing in Boston or L.A. So it's really, really cool. It's a goose-bump kind of feeling.

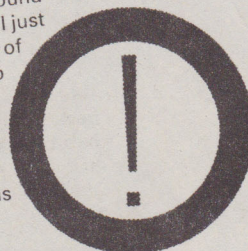
ANDREW: Well, we're gonna be in Vegas for Halloween. I can't give away any secrets for this year, but it's gonna be spectacular. Last year, I don't know what happened. I just woke up, and I heard that Batman played our show, Bruce Springsteen was there, a big whiskey bottle, a Viking [...] That was last year. I don't remember it.

SKRATCH: [Laughs] So you guys have big plans for this year, as well?

ANDREW: You could say that, yeah.

SKRATCH: It seems like a lot of the bands that get on the same bill with Against Me! are pretty diverse. What's usually the reaction from people who come to the show who may not have previously known about your band?

ANDREW: Hopefully just a good time, you know? I think we make it a point to tour with very diverse bands that don't sound like us. I mean, The Epoxies sure as hell don't sound like us. We don't sound like them, and we don't sound like The Soviettes or Smoke or Fire. I just think that that should be the point of a show. I mean, would you want to



I CAN'T GIVE ~~ANY~~ ANY SECRETS FOR THIS YEAR, BUT IT'S GONNA BE SPECTACULAR

SKRATCH: Did all of you guys always want to be in bands when you were growing up, or did this just sort of happen?

ANDREW: I've been playing bass since I was 12, and I'm 27 now. All I've ever wanted to do was be in bands and travel and not work a real job. I'm pretty sure I can speak for everybody when I say that we've all been in bands ever since we picked up an instrument.

SKRATCH: Halloween's coming up. Do you have any funny stories or favorite costumes?

SKRATCH: Are holidays a big thing for you guys?

ANDREW: Well, Halloween's by far the best holiday. Ever. I don't give a shit if it's all about the candy, and, you know, dressing up and being stupid. Sounds good to me!

SKRATCH: What's one of the coolest costumes you've seen?

ANDREW: Well, it's funny, because I think we dress up more than the audience for Halloween. I'd probably say the coolest outfit I've seen in a long time was last year. The Blood Brothers from Seattle were on tour with us, and they all dressed up as bananas. One of their singers, Johnny, dressed up as the Chiquita Banana lady. That was quite an event.

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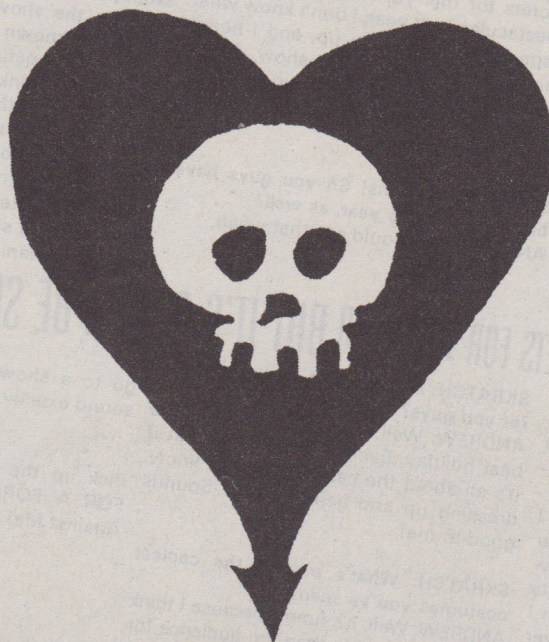
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ALKALINE TRIO

ALKALINE TRIO
By Joe Licavoli

Straight out of Chicago, emo-punks Alkaline Trio have been creating dark yet melodic and intense rock since 1997.

I had the chance to chat by telephone with bass player/vocalist Dan Andriano while Alkaline Trio was on tour with My Chemical Romance.

SKRATCH: How has the tour been going?

ANDRIANO: So far, it has been great.

SKRATCH: You are pretty good friends with My Chemical Romance. Have Alkaline Trio been on tour with them in the past?

ANDRIANO: No. We've done a couple shows together here and there, but nothing major.

SKRATCH: You guys have been touring for a long time. Is it tough going from a headlining tour straight onto this one?

ANDRIANO: Not really; it

makes it easier. You just kind of stay in the groove of playing. We went from playing for about an hour and 40 minutes [to] only like 45 minutes every night.

SKRATCH: How does the set list change from playing shows with My Chemical Romance compared to your own? Are there songs that you focus on more?

ANDRIANO: Not really. Lately, the three of us have kind of been talking and trying to change it up more and more than we have in the past. On a nightly basis, we are trying to put in older songs and just kind of keep it interesting for us, because we're not really getting sound checks or anything. We're just kind of going back and listening to our old stuff and trying to think of [songs] that maybe we should be playing. It keeps it fresh for us. It's been working out really well.

SKRATCH: Has it been strange playing before My Chemical Romance, or was it nice after playing your own shows?

ANDRIANO: It kind of makes things easier. We play the 45

minutes, and that's pretty much all we do all day. We get to hang out with friends like Reggie and the Full Effect and My Chemical Romance, so it's been a lot of fun.

SKRATCH: The latest album, CRIMSON, was produced by Jerry Finn (Green Day, Blink 182, Jawbreaker). What was the recording process like this time around?

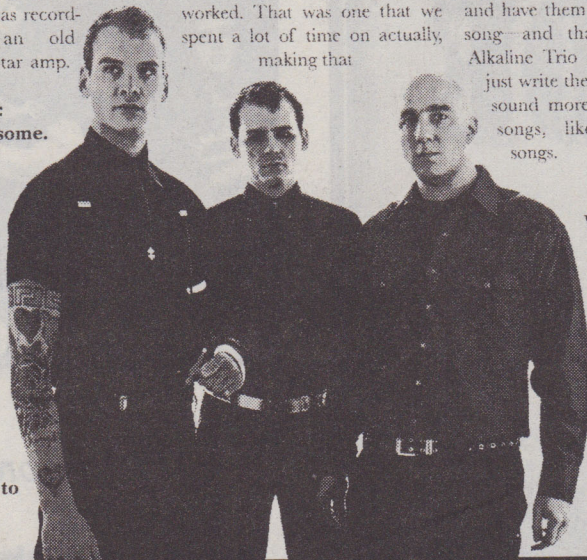
ANDRIANO: It was kind of the same as always. We just spent a little more time in all areas of the recording process. We spent a little more time in pre-production, where we worked on the songs with Jerry. Before we started recording, he came out to Chicago and [came to practices] and he was listening to the songs, and we had an opportunity to ask him what he thought. It kind of gave us more time to re-work some stuff that we thought could have been a little better but were a little stumped on, as Jerry had good ideas for the songs. And as far as the actual recording, it was great working with him. It was more like working with a friend.

We've known Jerry for a long time, and he's really easy to work with and be around for 12 hours a day. He's got an amazing gear collection. Any kind of guitar you want to use for a song or any kind of amplifier, he probably has it—and he probably has one of the nicest one's of that model. To me, recording was like being in a playground. It's just like, "Let me play this one. Let me try this." Every bass track on the record was recorded with an old Marshall guitar amp.

SKRATCH:

That's awesome.

CRIMSON had a couple set-backs because of some skateboarding accidents Matt was involved in. Did that give you guys some time to re-work songs?



of the song that made it to the final version. For the two years before we recorded it, I had been kind of toiling over this. It was kind of the bane of my writing existence. It scared me, because I knew I liked parts of it but was really unhappy with other parts. I couldn't make the vibe work. There was a time when that song was really soft, actually. I tried to make it like a loud, mid-tempo rock number, but nothing really worked. That was one that we spent a lot of time on actually, making that

like—and then I just record it in the simplest way I can think of so that Matt and Derek get it and are kind of forced to think of ways to make it more interesting. We all really want [the entire band's] input in our songs. Matt and I write 99% of the songs, but the songs would not sound anything like they do without Derek. We need his input, and I need Matt and Derek's input. I try and keep my songs kind of simple and have them add ideas to the song—and that makes it an Alkaline Trio song. If I would just write them, they would all sound more like Bob Dylan songs, like acoustic folk songs.

SKRATCH:

What was it like having a song on the **ROCK AGAINST BUSH VOLUME 1 CD** and playing the punkvoter tour with **NOFX**?

"To me, recording was like being in a playground."

ANDRIANO: Yeah, it was definitely a blessing in disguise. It sucks that Matt got hurt. As soon as he called me, he was all nervous that Derek and I were going to be bummed that we couldn't start recording. But, obviously, my first concern was to make sure he was okay. He was only out of commission for about a month. Like you said, it gave [Derek and me] a lot of time. Derek drove up from Indiana, so he and I just kind of worked on songs. We actually wrote a couple new songs that wouldn't have been recorded, and we worked on some stuff that we weren't entirely happy with, so it gave us a good amount of time.

SKRATCH: Off the top of your head what were some of those songs that you reworked or maybe wrote that had not been done before that happened?

ANDRIANO: There's a song on the record called "Smoke" that I wrote. It's the last song on the record. I actually wrote that song like two years ago. I knew I liked certain aspects of the song, and those were basically the aspects

groove that we wanted that's there now, almost a ballad [like] kind of song. It gave us a lot of time to think about cool effects. effects we could use on the chorus and string parts that are in the song.

SKRATCH: It was a nice way to close the album. What was the songwriting process like for **CRIMSON**? Did the songs all come at once, or was it something that was gradual?

ANDRIANO: Definitely gradual. We have been pretty much writing since we finished recording **GOOD MOURNING** [Alkaline Trio's 2003 release]. We had just been compiling a lot of ideas, and we ended up with a good amount of time off after touring for **GOOD MOURNING**. We all kind of have the ability to write songs at home, so it was basically kind of like Matt, myself, and Derek would record some song ideas and send them to each other on the Internet. That's basically how we do it. I write the song with the bare bones of it—a chorus, a couple verses, melodies I'm happy with and a couple guitar parts that I

ANDRIANO: It was great being a part of that record and that tour. It was good for us to be a part of something like that. That was our way of supporting something we felt strongly about. We could go there and do our thing, and hopefully, because we were playing, some kids would come to see us and then register to vote or pick up some literature. It was a great thing to be a part of.

SKRATCH: Where will Alkaline Trio be after the **My Chemical Romance** tour?

ANDRIANO: Were going to the U.K. to go on tour, and then we should get a little bit of time off. We're going to do some more international stuff early next year and probably do another headlining tour in spring of next year.

Make sure to check out Alkaline Trio's new release, **CRIMSON**, and be sure to catch the band playing your city soon. For more information on the band, go to alkalinetrio.com.

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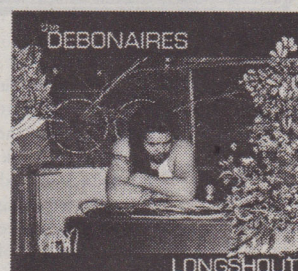
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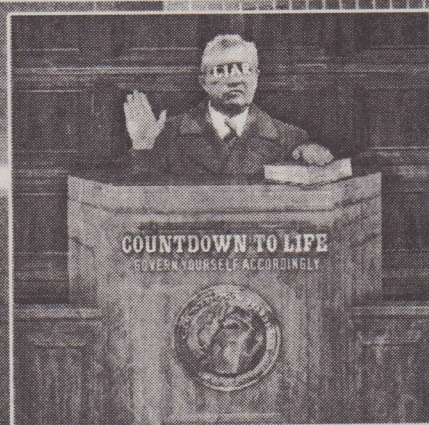
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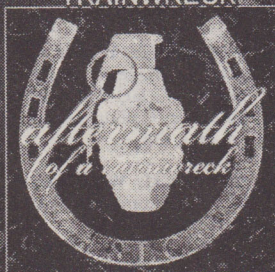
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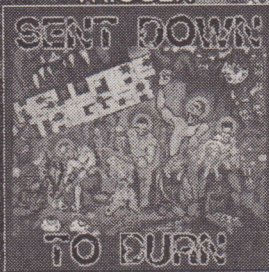
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circa survive

Circa Survive
By Mike SOS

Circa Survive is a new outfit comprised of former members of This Day Forward and Saosin. Thanks to their impressive pedigree, the quintet got signed to Equal Vision Records after only a handful of dates. Furthering the band's reputation is JUTURNA, their shimmering debut record, which raises the bar for post-hard-core.

When speaking to bassist Nick Beard via e-mail, the new album, the inevitable comparisons to other bands, and how he views Circa Survive all came up as topics of conversation.

SKRATCH: How did the band form? Who came up with the name of the band?

NICK: Colin and Anthony first started the band. They then snagged Brendan, then me, and finally Steve. I think Colin came up with the name.

SKRATCH: Was it easier or harder coming from established bands to get Circa Survive off the ground?

NICK: It was easier in some ways and harder in others: easier because we already had established connections to get things moving faster, harder because there was pressure put on us to make a record that a lot of people were anticipating.

SKRATCH: How did the band get signed to Equal Vision? Were you surprised to be signed so fast?

NICK: We pretty much got signed because of Colin and Brendan's connection from their previous band, This Day Forward—which isn't too surprising, because they had a great relationship with the label.

SKRATCH: How would you describe Circa Survive to someone who's never heard you before?

NICK: Atmospheric rock with some chocolate swirls.

SKRATCH: What comparisons to your band do you most strongly agree and disagree with?

NICK: The only comparisons I see turn up all the time are The Mars Volta and Coheed and Cambria. I would not really agree with either (besides our singer—like those bands' singers—having a high-ass voice).

SKRATCH: Describe the recording of JUTURNA. Where did you record it, and with whom, and were there any funny/interesting studio stories you'd like to share?

NICK: The recording process was pretty awesome. We recorded with Brian McTiernan at Salad Days. You get to live in the studio and just hang out and play music all day. The funniest thing that happened was when a branch fell

NICK: JUTURNA was mostly written while jamming a bunch and recording it all on tape, then going through the tapes and putting it all together.

SKRATCH: Do you prefer a gig or working in the studio?

NICK: If I'm playing some shows for too long, I want to record; if I'm recording for too long, I want to go play some shows. It's an endless cycle.

SKRATCH: Who are some of your musical influences? Are there any that we wouldn't be able to notice immediately?

NICK: My main influences include Cave In, Botch, and Tool. I think you can definitely see those coming through in the way I play.

SKRATCH: "When I'm not in Circa Survive, I'm..."?

NICK: Hangin' out, playing Nintendo.

SKRATCH: What do you guys have planned for the next six months?

"thanks for your support. bring us some chipotle"

and smashed Steve's windshield...but that's not really that funny.

SKRATCH: What was the easiest song to record? hardest? one you feel came out the best?

NICK: They were all pretty easy for me to record because my parts aren't really that involved—and I am pretty awesome. The song that I think turned out the best was "Stop the Fucking Car".

SKRATCH: What sets Circa Survive apart from other bands?

NICK: We are pretty much the best band out right now. No, but seriously, I don't know how to answer this without sounding like a douche.

SKRATCH: How does a Circa Survive song get written?

NICK: So far, it looks like touring for the next six months.

SKRATCH: What advice would you give to aspiring musicians?

NICK: Join bands, write music, and play shows.

SKRATCH: Where is your favorite place to play live?

NICK: So far, Philadelphia and Southern California have been the most fun.

SKRATCH: What would you like to accomplish with Circa Survive in 2005?

NICK: I would like to just play a bunch—hopefully, well enough to make kids come back to see us again.

SKRATCH: Do you have any final words for the fans?

NICK: Thanks for your support. Bring us some Chipotle.

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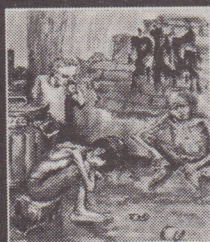
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Haste the Day
By Denise Blaz

I first met the members of Haste the Day about a year back when they were in town to play one of the 264 shows they played that year. I was there to interview them, and they ended up crashing out in my living room that night. Since then, nothing but good things have happened for them: their new CD, *WHEN EVERYTHING FALLS*, is now being released overseas; they've been featured in *ALTERNATIVE PRESS*; and a couple of their videos have even gotten some airtime on MTV2. I've seen kids go crazy for these guys, and they're supremely deserving of their success. They are extremely good guys who are wholeheartedly devoted to God and what they love to do: play.

DEVIN: Hey, Denise. I was wondering if it was you.

SKRATCH: Yeah, how are you guys? Where are you right now?

DEVIN: We're good. We are in Little Rock, AR, at a hotel.

SKRATCH: How have the shows been?

DEVIN: They've been great. The crowds have been growing. It seems like the kids are really catching on to this CD. The response to the new songs has been great. We're really excited to be in the band right now.

SKRATCH: You guys played so many shows last year. Is there one that just stands out?

DEVIN: I think the Cornerstone Festival is always a really special time for all of us in the band. The shows are always really packed, and the kids are always fanatical. Some of them have traveled to see all of their favorite bands. It's a lot of fun, and we always meet a lot of cool people. The shows there are always awesome.

SKRATCH: How was the recording process for this record? Did you write songs on the road?

DEVIN: We did do a little bit of

writing while we were on tour, but we actually took some time off, which is odd for us. We took two months at home and wrote the music for the new record. But then we got the offer to go on tour with Strung Out, and we had to take it.

SKRATCH: How was that tour?

DEVIN: The tour went really well for us—partly because Strung Out has been around for a really long time. A lot of kids who are into hardcore now started off listening to punk-rock bands years ago, so a lot of older Strung Out fans are people now into hardcore. The crowds were great, and we were really well received, for the most part.

SKRATCH: What were you trying to go for as far as the vision for the album?

DEVIN: We were just trying to write the most mature and thought-out album that we could. When we were writing, we isolated every guitar riff and every little drum roll and kind of analyzed it and made sure that everything we were doing made sense. We made sure that all the melodies were fun and catchy and that the words were exactly what we wanted to say. So, by the time we got to the studio, we had worked hours upon hours on every riff and every melody. With *BURNING BRIDGES*, we were touring so much, and we didn't have the financial freedom to go home and write for a while. But then we didn't really have any options, because we hadn't signed the deal with Solid State. It was a hectic time and we didn't have any time to develop the songs. But regarding this new record, we feel like we put out a record that we're proud of.

SKRATCH: The guys from the band From Autumn to Ashes do some guest vocals. How did that come about?

DEVIN: We were recording with GGGarth Richardson in Vancouver, and they were also recording with him, so we invited them to do some vocals on one of the songs. It worked out really well, and that was awesome.

SKRATCH: I checked your Myspace page. There are so many comments on there.

DEVIN: It is pretty crazy when I log on and see 40-100 comments a day from kids around the country and the world. I can't believe that many people care about my band. It blows us all away, because for us it's such a part of our lives, [and we're surprised that] people to identify with it as much as we do.

SKRATCH: I read that you guys might tour Europe.

DEVIN: Yeah, there's a possibility that we might be doing that in January and February. It's still in the air, but hopefully it'll happen. It would be a step for us. We've toured the U.S. and we've toured Canada, so I'm hoping we can hit overseas soon.

SKRATCH: What have you been listening to lately?

DEVIN: A lot of us listen to different things. We listen to hardcore and metal, but for the most part we listen to other things. I think that's because of the overload that we get on tour every night with the bands we tour with. I find that I listen to a lot of pop and pop/rock stuff. I listen to Elton John and Billy Joel, and I love Copeland—just the less abrasive bands out there who are writing fun rock music. I just like good pop melodies, and I think that a lot of us appreciate well-written pop songs. But that's not to say that we don't listen to bands like Lamb of God and Killswitch Engage. The occasional hardcore band comes up on our iPods.

SKRATCH: Is the success you've been having kind of surreal?

DEVIN: Yeah. We talk about this from time to time. We'll be sitting around a



table at Denny's or something after a show, and we kind of take a step back and realize that some of our wildest dreams are being realized. I understand that Haste the Day is a really small band—we're no Bon Jovi—but it's a lot of fun for us to be able to go out and tour. With the whole MTV2 thing, it's definitely really surreal to go over to a friend's house and see our video.

SKRATCH: What do you consider to be the best part of touring?

DEVIN: I think my favorite part is all the people who we get to meet. It's really fun to play. I love performing; it's awesome. But more than anything, we enjoy what's more lasting: the friendship from the people that we meet.

SKRATCH: Has being in the band made you grow as a person?

DEVIN: I think it's taught me a lot about myself—and we've all learned a lot about each other. It really has taught us all about self-improvement and being better people. It's a lot like being married, and it's teaching us a lot of life skills for when we do get married. I think we've learned a lot about the world around us. Growing up, you have a certain amount of potential for knowledge given the situation you're in, depending on what you're exposed to. I think being on tour exposes us to all different types of people, and we've just learned a lot about people in general. As Christians, we've learned a lot about how to relate to people outside the Church. We're actually getting out there, and that's something I would encourage any Christian who is reading this magazine or whatever to do: get out

there. I think a lot of churches are afraid to go outside of its walls. I would tell any Christian to just get out there and not be afraid of what's out in the world.

SKRATCH: I think that's it. Thanks for the interview.

DEVIN: Totally. It was great. We hadn't talked in a while.

Haste the Day is currently on the road in support of their new CD, **WHEN EVERYTHING FALLS**. Tour information can be found on their Website at www.hastetheday.com.

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I AM THE AVALANCHE



I Am the
Avalanche: An Interview
By Brian Spiegel

Sometimes short and sweet is more impressive than long and drawn out. For example: that three minute pop song is sometimes more intriguing than that challenging seven-minute opus that has that three minute oboe solo. I guess what I'm getting at is that as an interviewer I love it

when an artist can keep it short and sweet yet portray the stories and emotions of a long, drawn out interview. Plus if you give love to The Decemberists then you are already ok in my book.

From the ashes of The Movielife, one of the most underrated bands of the new millennium (the song "Walking on Glass" remains an iPod favorite), comes lead singer Vinnie Caruana's new band, I Am the Avalanche. While not a complete departure from the harder pop/punk sound of The Movielife, I Am

The Avalanche utilizes strong, conflicting vocals and a hell of a collection of transplanted musicians (guitarist Brandon Swanson formally of Further Seems Forever, bassist Kellen Robson of Scrapes and Heart Attacks,

Michael Ireland on guitar and Brett Romnes on drums) to make a debate album that sounds both new and established at the same time.

I got a chance to talk to Vinnie about his new band via the e-mail. As I said before, the answers were short and sweet with an emphasis on letting his true self hang out. Dr. Phil would be proud.

SKRATCH: So how did you jump from the breakup of The Movielife to creating I Am the Avalanche?

VINNIE: It wasn't really a jump. More like a stroll. It took

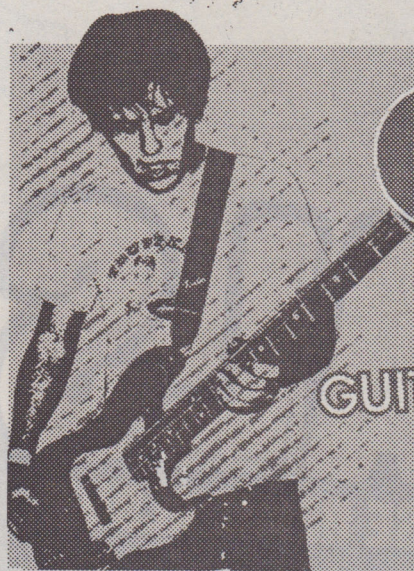
a while and that was important. I needed to wait until I was ready and it felt right.

SKRATCH: Do you find that with I Am the Avalanche you get to use a lot more of your vocal range? I noticed in just a few songs how much you vary your voice on your record.

VINNIE: Yes, thanks for noticing. I definitely have a lot more fun singing now.

SKRATCH: Your bio says that following the breakup of The Movielife you did construction for awhile. How much of a jolt was it to go back to the real world after spending years playing music?

VINNIE: It was scary for sure! I was depressed. My life was really weird until this band started. [I was] bouncing from thing to thing and not really feeling like myself.



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SKRATCH: Describe the writing process for I Am the Avalanche vs. for The Movielife. The lyrics seem much more personal.

VINNIE: These lyrics are way better; flat out. I have way more of a grasp on myself then back then. I [also] pay a lot more attention to the lyrical side of things.

SKRATCH: Was there a theme that ran through the album?

VINNIE: In the beginning it was a bit morbid, but not in a completely negative way. Then it was sarcasm. The songs have totally different vibes in my brain.

SKRATCH: Your bio says that you worked on the Head Automatica album. How was that experience?

VINNIE: Actually I joined closer to the end of the recording process. We started rehearsing for shows. It was amazing being around my good friends and playing tunes. Living in San Francisco was so fun.

SKRATCH: When you were writing most of these songs did you ever envision them being released or was the writing more for your sanity at that time?

VINNIE: I had no plans for a band. I just wanted to write: let it out, get positive again. The

SKRATCH: I Am the Avalanche seems like a very personal, deep band name. Would you like to share what it means?

VINNIE: It's me. That's what I was when I named the band: an extremely volatile thing that was ready to spill over. I

VINNIE: Two weeks with the Honorary Title, one week with Piebald, and then the U.K. with Gym Class Heroes. And we are currently on tour with Bayside.

It's rare that an artist who is so lyrically open on a record

"...WE WANT PEOPLE TO BELIEVE IN THE SPIRIT OF OUR BAND. IT'S A FAMILY VIBE."

way I exist as a positive being is to let it all out in a song.

SKRATCH: Describe a typical I Am the Avalanche live show.

VINNIE: Intensity and sincerity. We want to be there and we want people to believe in the spirit of our band. It's a family vibe.

SKRATCH: What kind of music are you listening to right now?

VINNIE: The Streets, George Harrison, and The Decemberists.

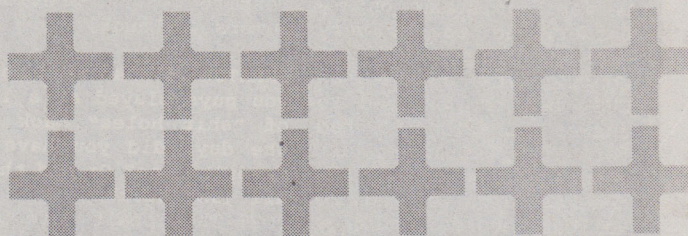
wrote it in a lyric and then just used it as a name. I was toying around with other names but as soon as I wrote that down I knew.

SKRATCH: How did CMJ go?

VINNIE: One of our best shows! New York City is our home and they are always great to us. That was a great day.

SKRATCH: After your tour what is up next for I Am the Avalanche?

gives such open answers. Open answers lead to a good interview. Good interviews lead to new fans. New fans lead to good sales of I Am the Avalanche's self titled debut album out now on Drive Thru records. New fans lead to great live shows, like the ones that the band will be playing on the west coast in mid October with Rock Kills Kid and The Audition. Go to the shows, support good music and make sure you give Vinnie a nice, big hug.



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Orange
By Audiophile

I have never before been so insulted in an interview, sir? No SIR? Do I LOOK like a SIR? Does the name AMANDA scream I HAVE A PENIS? Despite bass player/singer Joe Denman's mistake on my gender, he was a very energetic interviewee. I don't think anyone has EVER been so excited to answer questions I had for them. Orange just happens to be one of the newest bands signed to Hellcat Records, and they aren't half bad and they have one hell

so soon? What were your thoughts during the whole process of negotiation?

JOE: Helllllllls NO sir! We made our demo PURELY for friends and family just to prove after years of saying "Our band Orange is really great!" to them that we do exist! Despite previous rumors...[Laugh]

SKRATCH: I also read that you guys played at a lot of "shit holes" back in the day, did you have a favorite one? Or did they all just suck?

JOE: The Cobalt Cafe was by far the worst! The venue itself was

great, amazing, positive people to make our first video with. We farted and made jokes the whole time. We got to do a lot of fun stuff because of them, like rented an entire bowling alley at Hollywood and Highland (for those into the history of rock n' roll) and bowled each other down the lanes, got on the very top of a fucking 15 story hotel roof top, hanging off of billboards, and got the Guitar Center on sunset blvd ALL TO OURSELVES! It was one of the best experiences, especially being our first video shoot ever. But now we can't use the video because we look nothing like that anymore. So we're currently in the works of making a new video for "Hollywood".

SKRATCH: How was working in the studio with Phil Jarigui and Robin Holden? How different were these recording sessions in comparison to recording your demo?

JOE: Well they were definitely longer, much longer. Recording an album takes quite a lot of time.

Especially when you go in to record your debut with six songs! I wrote like a mad man that month. A lot of great songs were written during that time like "Cool Mexicans" and "Hollywood". 10 am till 11 pm every single day for two months. They were amazing to work with, you couldn't find a better team. Phil is a mad man on the guitar, any band who is starting out, he's an amazing producer and a great friend and his empire Swinghouse Studios is on Formosa and Santa Monica in Hollywood, check it out! Robin, he was English so we automatically hit it

off right away, you can't NOT get along with a British man who is obsessed with music. It was nice to have someone who thought everything we did was hysterical. We're going to have them work with us again for sure. Possibly for the Christmas single...more on that to come my friends!!!

SKRATCH: What's your favorite song off of WEL-COME TO THE WORLD OF...ORANGE? Why is it your favorite?

JOE: All of our favorite song is "Cool Mexicans", I think it's a great song! I came home from a Social Distortion gig with my dad and there were SO many Latino punks. I thought it was really cool. So I wrote a cool song. I guess you can say it is really cool...yeah, super cool!

SKRATCH: Lets say you could share the stage with any band, dead or alive, who would you share the stage with?

JOE: Green Day, The Sex Pistols and Rancid! Quite the bill I say! Tim, remember that! Green Day is the best live band I have ever seen, they get better and better every time I see them. The Sex Pistols I have seen twice and Johnny is an amazing front man. He's got the moves and the music rocks. Rancid are modern day punk heroes and one of my favorite bands, I don't like to go on too much because it seems like we're sucking up to Tim, but genuinely we all really do love them.

SKRATCH: Do you guys pick out your own clothes or do you actually have a stylist? Not that there's anything wrong with yellow suits with striped red T-shirts...

JOE: [Laugh] No we do NOT have a stylist. We wear what we think of. It may come in a dream or a sketch, but it's all us. Those are our SUPER SUITES! When we put on our clothes we become super hero rock stars! Everything you see us do comes from THE WORLD OF ORANGE!



Orange

of a fashion sense. You might want to check them out after you read this interview; they're like British OI punk...without the British part.

SKRATCH: First and foremost, how old are you guys? You look rather young, I don't mean that as an insult, it's good to look young.

JOE: Well, you're right on the money! We're all 17 or 16 years old. We're young but totally dedicated forever to rock n' roll!

SKRATCH: In 2004, after your second show at the Key Club, you guys went into negotiations with Epitaph/Hellcat, did you expect for it to happen

absolutely fine, but fuck me, that show sucked a fifty pound bag of shit. Some band wanted to kill us because Jack called 'em a "beaner-fest". [Laugh] No one came and it was in the hood. Not our scene really. We played there twice just for the experience.

SKRATCH: Your music was featured in Apples GarageBand software commercial, did they actually mix any of your music with that program or was it all just lies?

JOE: [Laugh] Wow yeah, total lies. They didn't mix a thing. They were SO fucking amazing though! Seriously! They were such

SKRATCH:

Any plans for touring? Are you going to be the headlining act or are you going to be supporting another band's tour? JOE: Well that's a good question. A lot of booking agents are scared to take us on because we're not 18 yet. So watch ya' gunna do? Everything we do is totally DIY. I'm pretty sure after our record release party we should be able to get a

hole to someone so it's about who ever you want it to be about really. Anybody, teachers, bullies, ex-best friends, jealous fucks, parents, or whoever you're mad at is who it's about. Even the president! But it's also totally about forgiveness and moving on with life, not staying stuck in the past and rockin' on hard and fast! Why be mad at someone when all you're going to get is even

record release. Fuck, that was so fucking fun, I fell in love with two girls that night!

SKRATCH: Do you guys all have those cool Sidekick cell phones? Is it really as cool as they make it seem?

JOE: Oh fuck yes. I'm the only one who has got one right now in the band but Jack really wants one. I've lost two so far. I'm currently looking for the 2nd one right

teenager who hates their parents because it's trendy, every single weekend for four years. We never hung out with anyone else but each other and play music for four years. I dumped my first girlfriend after two weeks because my weekends were dedicated to the band. We don't have time for anything else. We want to do what Green Day, The Ramones and Rancid did, but bigger, better, and

I learned more from The Simpsons than I ever did in school

booking agent now, wish us luck. But yes we are working on a Christmas tour. Not sure who with yet, but stay tuned folks!

SKRATCH: Who is that certain special asshole that "Forgive and Forget" is dedicated to? You know you want to tell me, this way it gets published in a magazine that lots of people will read. Don't deny that you want it to happen.

JOE: [Laugh] That's awesome! It's about everybody! Everybody is an ass-

angrier and not nice feelings. So "Forgive and Forget" the past!

SKRATCH: Have you guys even finished high school yet? Are you even old enough to drink? I bet you drink anyway, naughty kids.

JOE: I'm not in school anymore, I left, it's a fucking waste of time. I learned more from The Simpsons than I ever did in school! Rock! None of us can drink yet...legally anyways. I got drunk for the first time in my life two nights ago after our

now. But hey, everybody needs a Sidekick!

SKRATCH: Do any of you feel you missed anything by starting a band so young instead of playing video games or whatever?

JOE: Why play video games when you can start a rock band? It's all about rock. Life is about rockin' out, partying and having a good time. That's the meaning of life, rock n' roll! Yes we started when we were 13 (Jack was 12) and all we have ever done since is be a band. Not some asshole

faster. We want to be the biggest and greatest band in the whole world. We want to be around FOREVER and inspire kids to pick up guitars and form bands. We did it, so can you! Never take a moment for granted, this life is all we got, live it, love it, rock! And also, join the punk radicals at www.orange-band.com! Peace. I'm out!

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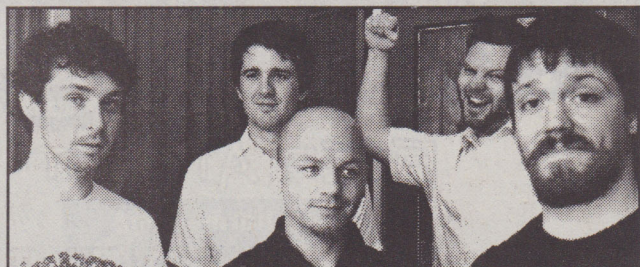
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BEARVS SHARK

Bear Vs. Shark
By Brian Spiegel

The first time I heard Bear Vs. Shark was completely by chance. I was at Fingerprints in Long Beach (the only good place to buy music in my area) looking through CDs while waiting for a pizza. Not expecting to buy anything, I was casually looking under "B" when I came upon a rather generic-looking CD with an odd name on it: Bear Vs. Shark. I found myself intrigued. I took the CD over to the player and pushed play. After hearing the intro to "Ma Jolie" (the first song on RIGHT NOW YOU'RE IN THE BEST OF HANDS), I immediately walked over to the cashier and bought the CD. It's not a great story, but it's a testament to how some bands can grab you with little warning.

Now the band is back with TERRORHAWK, an album that improves on their breakneck "post-hardcore" (thank you, PITCHFORK)-with-a-heart-of-gold sound. A great album front to back, TERRORHAWK should be the kind of album that is too good for any corporate radio station to play but will become a massive hit with



people who have better taste.

I got a chance to talk to BVS guitarist/bassist John Gaviglio via e-mail to ask him some (in my journalistic opinion) thrilling and bone-shattering questions. Once I got the answers back, one thing became clear: there are an increasing number of bands that have begun naming their bands after dead shamans. Bear Vs. Shark now joins Hoobastank, The Click Five, and Architecture in Helsinki now increasing musical trend.

SKRATCH: I know that bands usually hate the "how did your band get its name" question, but I've always been curious where you guys got "Bear Vs. Shark."

JOHN: It was a cold December, and the sherpa town needed medical supplies badly after a bad batch of cholera broke out. Traveling to town required a jaunt over a snow-deluged pass. We left, desperately trying to get the supplies in time to save the life of our shaman, Bear Vs. Shark. Unfortunately, we were struck by a

white-out storm on the way and did not make it in time. 27 years later to the day, Bear Vs. Shark visited me in a dream and thanked me for the attempt to save his life. In his honor we have named our band.

SKRATCH: TERRORHAWK is a great album, better than RIGHT NOW YOU'RE IN THE BEST OF HANDS (which was great, too). Was it an easy album to write and record, or was it wrought with hardships (like something we might see on BEHIND THE MUSIC)?

JOHN: That's your opinion [that TERRORHAWK is great], not a journalistic fact. It was time-consuming, but we wanted to put forth our all and not half-ass it.

SKRATCH: Did you guys record the new album on Pro Tools? If so, how do you think that Pro Tools has affected the recording of indie-rock music?

JOHN: We did use Pro Tools for the recording, but we tried to leave as much as possible from the original live recordings as an entire band. And instead of correcting things digitally, we just would do a million takes

makes an awesome-sounding word that makes you think of things...in your head.

SKRATCH: Do you consider yourself an "indie-rock" band?

JOHN: Yes, since we are a rock band on an indie label. I think it's hard to categorize us-but people are always willing to try.

SKRATCH: How do you feel about touring with a harder rock band like Fear Before the March of Flames?

JOHN: I feel great about it. I think we could play with [anyone from] acoustic bands all the way to metal bands.

SKRATCH: PITCHFORK described you guys as "post-hardcore." What do you think of that label?

JOHN: I believe that they also pointed out that we are a very diverse band, even saying that there was an indie band in us dying to be let out. I think that was a very good review for us-and it was pretty honest about who we are as a band.

SKRATCH: You guys are currently working on a video. What song is it for? Can you give us a sneak preview of the idea?

"WE TOOK THE WORD "TERROR" AND ADDED IT TO "HAWK." COMBINING THEM MAKES AN AWESOME-SOUNDING WORD THAT MAKES YOU THINK OF THINGS..."

JOHN: It is for "Catamaran". No previews. Sorry.

SKRATCH: Your bio reads: "While the sound on the new record will be fairly familiar to BVS' ever-increasing devoted fan base, TERRORHAWK is an amalgam of the group's collective musical passions and obsessions-ranging from Black Sabbath to The Commodores." Was that tongue in cheek, or is that what you feel your new album encompasses?

JOHN: I feel like we really are a diverse band. [However, while] we don't sound like The Commodores or Black Sabbath exactly, you can hear the influences.

SKRATCH: Aside from The White Stripes and The Suicide Machines, how does the music scene look in Michigan right now?

JOHN: I think there are a lot of places to play and a lot of people to going to shows, so that is good for people who want to start bands. Head Will Roll, and Red Party are awesome Michigan bands that you should check out.

SKRATCH: For those who haven't had the pleasure of seeing your live

shows, please describe a typical BVS concert.

JOHN: Five guys, Roman candles, beer, Castlevania, and orange.

SKRATCH: What is Bear Vs. Shark's eating habits on the road?

JOHN: Taco Bell, granola bars, pizza, Slim Fast, bagels, donuts, lots of coffee, lots of beer, and lots of water.

SKRATCH: Has your band had any Spinal Tap-ish moments on the road? JOHN: When we played Quebec City, it was at a very large YMCA building. At this venue, we had to walk so far to the room from the entrance-like, down two stories, through rooms and a million different hallways...! It sucked even worse for us because we had to load in all of our equipment ourselves up and down those stairs. Almost none of our shit has wheels on it, either. Luckily, there were a bunch of French Canadians trying to teach us French the whole time we were loading, and they wouldn't get out of our way or leave us alone until we said something like, "Voulez-vous my asshole" or something.

SKRATCH: What would you say are your band's main influences in your

music? JOHN: Music, art, science, animals, people, and places.

SKRATCH: Who would you put your money on in a fight between the two, a bear or a shark?

JOHN: Why would you want to cheapen such a beautiful battle with bets? Let people bet on wasp vs. moth-one of my dirty faves. By the way, the moth wins.

SKRATCH: What is next for BVS? JOHN: A full tour of the U.S. in October. Fun!

Fun indeed. Bear Vs. Shark is currently touring with Fear Before the March of Flames. The tour weaves through the whole country before finally ending on November 6 in St. Louis. The band's PITCHFORK-approved album, TERRORHAWK, is out now on Equal Vision Records. And if you're planning a trip, you can visit a memorial plaque to the band's favorite shaman, Bear Vs. Shark, in that sherpa town Monday-Thursdays, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. for a \$6 donation. Exact change is suggested.



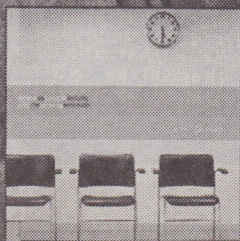
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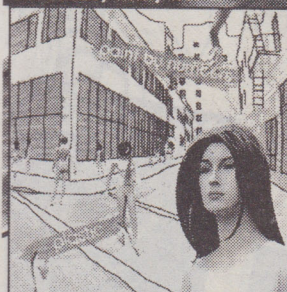


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xbxrx
By Mabel Lam

Whether it's their band members, or their shows or even their band name, xbxrx is as

for letting loose at their shows—even if that means it only lasts eight minutes.

SKRATCH: You guys only conduct interviews via e-mail. Personally, I prefer the same—but that's only because I'm far too lazy to transcribe out 30-minute interviews. What's your reason behind this preference?

XBXRX: We learned that by

simply refer to yourselves as band members rather than your own names, to create unity. Doesn't that make s w i t c h i n g lineups harder? XBXRX: No, because the band concept is larger than the individuals for the most part. It has taken on its own personality. We believe that change is both inevitable and necessary, so as the years have gone by the approach has expanded to include dif-

SKRATCH: You guys are also known for throwing the craziest shows. I live in Santa Cruz, where people kind of pride themselves on being "weird". You think they would be able to handle a show from you guys? XBXRX: Everyone gives and takes from situations differently. I'd like to think that everyone has a need for a therapeutic release and that

XBXRX

doing interviews we could have more control over misquotes and "should have said..." situations. Answering interviews at our own leisure will usually yield better answers. It enables us to put more thought in to it. We are also very big on being able to make sure the answers are ok with everyone in the band and aren't just representing a single personal opinion under the xbxrx banner.

SKRATCH: Another preference you guys have is to

ferent musical aspects. Regardless, xbxrx has always been concerned with high energy. This aspect has never waned in the slightest regardless of what the music specifically sounds like or who is playing on it.

SKRATCH: Does the anonymity ever bite you in the ass? XBXRX: We can't recall a situation where this has happened.

SKRATCH: Do you parents enjoy the anonymity? XBXRX: This band has nothing to do with parents. It's about the kids.

is a big reason we do what we do.

SKRATCH: Is it strange to be playing for an audience that is mostly older than you guys are? (Well, or back when there were still younglings in the band) XBXRX: We wouldn't say this is the case at all. It seems like a lot of different people from different age groups come to see us. Lately we've been noticing a lot of teenage girls at the shows. We're happy that they find an xbxrx show as being an environment that they can enjoy themselves without being assailed by the hard-

mysterious and chaotic as it gets. However, one thing IS that rock solid is their latest release, Sixth in Sixes. Even their original whereabouts may not be applicable anymore since the band is continuously drawing in new members from all over the country, while others depart. Ever since the beginning, xbxrx has become reputable

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core/jock assault that happens at a lot of shows that focus on overt intensity. We're proud that we can create a cathartic musical situation that doesn't resort to random violence, particularly in the form of a bunch of guys beating the hell out of each other and calling it "a pit".

SKRATCH: What I admire about you guys is that you guys assert that everything has already been done before. Does it suck to have a jaded attitude when you start so young though?

XBXR: Where did we assert this? I would say that at least half of the band would readily disagree with this statement, regardless of whoever said it. We're pragmatic as a whole, and hardly jaded at all. We believe in what we do and we stand behind it 100 percent. There's no detachment or cynicism about xbxx from the inside.

SKRATCH: It's no news that you guys get roughed up at your shows—but what about the equipment? How much do you think you guys have spent on replacing stuff over the years?

XBXR: As far as the finances of it go, ten of our guitars equate to between six and fifteen of a lot of bands' guitars. Duct tape and a screwdriver tend to make things last a long time.

SKRATCH: At least, if you need to replace equipment, does this give you a chance to experiment with other

XBXR: They set a mood or create a release of tension before the next wave of attack.

SKRATCH: Is it difficult to name them? Or is the shortness of them completely irrelevant?

XBXR: They are abstract,

while you can.

Check out www.xbxx.com to see if you can make it out to one of their shows!

"WE'RE PROUD THAT WE CAN CREATE A CATHARTIC MUSICAL SITUATION THAT DOESN'T RESORT TO RANDOM VIOLENCE..."

stuff?

XBXR: We try to experiment with ideas out of necessity. We try to do our best at every break, but we can't spend too long at the rest stop otherwise we will never make it home on time.

SKRATCH: What's your experimenting process like?

XBXR: We don't use maps—or rather, we choose to ignore them. When all minds are put together we find our way through it by working together.

SKRATCH: In your latest release, Sixth in Sixes, there are short, short interludes scattered around. What's the point of those?

expressionistic entities. The names are created in order to help the pieces evoke whatever it is they evoke.

SKRATCH: Can you give me a little more background on this theory of a sixth extinction?

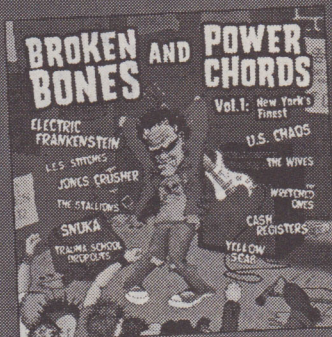
XBXR: Humanity has abused the earth and as a result the earth will return the favor with some serious retribution soon. It's not going to be the "apocalypse" that the religious fanatics who run our country want it to be. It's probably going to be another dark age. get ready for it. Enjoy what you've got



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CHIODOS
By: Beth Van Boxtel
Photos by nickdmack.com

Chiodos or CHEE-OH-DOSE is one of those bands that have captured the hearts of many progressive-rock, hardcore thrill seekers. Since the band's inception, they have surfaced over other bands that fall short in the post-hardcore and screamo era, even with a few lineup changes. *ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL*, their latest full-length, was released only a few short months ago on Equal Vision Records. Each song on the album is carefully crafted so that it always keep the listener surprised and wanting more powerful vocals, chilling screams, meddling guitars, and bizarre piano tunes. In the midst of t

heir busy touring schedule, I caught up with vocalist Craig Owens after waking from a mid-afternoon nap to chat about his latest endeavors.

SKRATCH: First off, I heard that you recently contributed to *The Sound of Animals Fighting* album that is coming out. Did you do just two tracks?

CRAIG: Yeah, I did two tracks. One is a *cappella* with just me singing, and I think that's what's going to start off the record. It's one-and-a-half to two minutes of just me singing this classical piece that I wrote. Then I did vocals on a song called "Midnight Drive Through El Paso" which is a

crazy, techno song. The new album is amazing. I can't wait for everybody to hear it.

SKRATCH: Do you know when that will be released?
CRAIG: Early next year.

SKRATCH: And you also have a side project going, *Cinematic Sunrise*. Are you holding that off until you promote the new Chiodos album a little more?

CRAIG: Yeah, we're doing touring out on the road right now until December 21st. Then I'll go into the studio to record a *Cinematic Sunrise* EP, which will probably be six songs. We're just going to post them all online and

make them available for free for all the kids. I start recording that on January 2nd.

SKRATCH: Now focusing on the purpose of this interview, let's talk about Chiodos. I heard the band is named after two Italian directors, The Chiodos Brothers. But then the band's name changed the name from The Chiodos Bros. to Chiodos when the lineup changed. Was that your choice or your label's choice?

CRAIG: It was a collective decision. We, as a band, wanted to do it for the member change situation.

SKRATCH: And the album art on this album is from the same artist that was used for the last album. Do you really like Paul Romano's style?

CRAIG: Yeah I absolutely love his work. He's drawing up a half-sleeve [tattoo] for my arm. I already have some of his work and I admire what he does.

CHIODOS



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SKRATCH: How did you find him?

CRAIG: He did this band, Mastodon's work. And Leviathan. So I said, "Sweet! Let's use him!"

SKRATCH: Recently you recorded a video for the first single "One Day Women Will All Become Monsters." And it's been released on October 11th through Yahoo! Music's website. Anything weird or cool happen during the video shoot?

CRAIG: Umm yeah. I got to kiss the zombie girl. I just thought that was really cool. It just tasted like a bunch of makeup. [Laughs] It was ridiculous.

think we wrote two songs after. But then I was sick for about four months. My lung collapsed on tour and I had to re-learn how to walk and everything. We dealt with that. And then we figured out what label to go with. Then went into the studio and recorded.

SKRATCH: Current tour. You're out with The Fall of Troy. Has it been a better tour this time around than the tour with He Is Legend?

CRAIG: Both of them were amazing. It's fun now because we've actually ended up headlining the whole tour. It's great to see so many kids out and the album is being accepted so well. Every single night is just a huge sing-a-long. It's great.

SKRATCH: Are there any particular songs that kids love singing along to?

CRAIG: A lot of it is "Baby, You Wouldn't Last a Minute On the Creek." And then "There's No Penguins in Alaska."

SKRATCH: Well that's good to promote your album like that.

CRAIG: Yeah definitely. We're pushing it 100% right now.

SKRATCH: Your 2006 tour plans. We've already touched on it, but anything set in stone yet for Chiodos?

CRAIG: Actually we have really really huge plans that I can't tell you about until it's confirmed, but we're going to tour non-stop through the year. There's going to be some crazy-huge tours. I'm really really excited.

SKRATCH: What's your local scene like back home in Michigan? Are there sold-out shows every time?

CRAIG: Oh yeah. We play huge-capacity venues.

[Phone cuts out. Craig calls back to make sure I ask him the last question]

THE NEW ALBUM IS AMAZING. I CAN'T WAIT FOR EVERYBODY TO HEAR IT.

SKRATCH: So the Chiodos album came out in July, but how long ago were the songs written?

CRAIG: Actually some of the songs were written well over a year-and-a-half ago. We had a bunch of songs written and we had ready prior to signing with Equal Vision. I

SKRATCH: What percentage of the songs you play during your set on your current tour is from your latest album?

CRAIG: One hundred percent. I think we busted out an old song here and there, like twice.

SKRATCH: Any bands back home that you'd like to plug?

CRAIG: The Weekend and Anathallo. They're both unsigned.

Catch Chiodos at a nearby venue on one of their many tours. For tour info or free music downloads, visit their website at www.chiodos.net.

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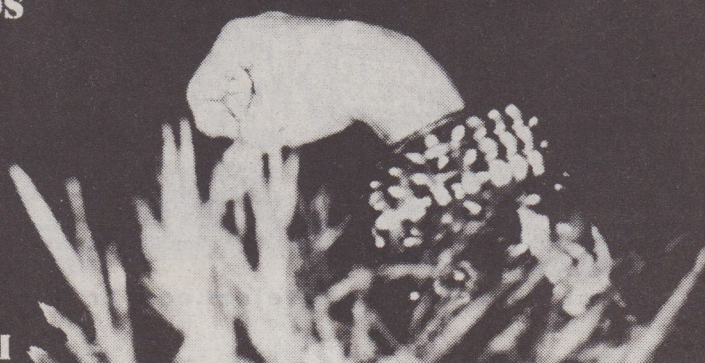


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Nural
Interview by
Melissa Wong

Between serving double-shot soy lattes and sorting CDs, the guys from Nural had a lot of work to do before scoring full-time tour band status and a debut album on Hopeless Records. But that was three years ago. Today, the five-piece from La Crescenta, CA, have a lot to be excited about: the band's first full-length album, **THE WEIGHT OF THE WORLD**, was released on Hopeless Records on August 9; the guys just returned from a tour in Japan; they have a new video out for "The Curse"; and they'll be playing alongside Voodoo Glow Skulls on U.K. dates during November.

Nural is Kyle Castellani on vocals, Kyle Black on bass, Ryan Davis on guitar and vocals, Aaron Breding on drums, and Charley Hoy on guitar.

Vocalist Kyle Castellani took some time out to talk to me about inspirations behind the new album, fans in Japan, songwriting "Martha Stewart style," and what makes the ultimate "SHIT List" for scary movies.

SKRATCH: Many bands form from rival bands. Regardless of how high-school bands come and go, what is it about guys who move forward and fulfill their dreams, as opposed to those who never leave home?

CASTELLANI: In a town like ours, it's hard to find musicians—or at least dedicated ones—so kids go posting flyers saying, "Vocalist needed" and stuff like that. But what I've found is that those kinds of bands usually don't last, because even though you're going out and finding the best musicians in your area, there is no chemistry between any of the members. To be in a band is more than making music: it has to feel like family.

SKRATCH: Before touring full-time, did any of you have part-time jobs?

CASTELLANI: We were all in high school when we first started touring. We

would have to skip school to go play shows. Our guitarists Charley and Ryan both had jobs at coffee shops, and the rest of us were pretty much kinda lazy. I had a job at a record store for like five months.

SKRATCH: You have a new record out on Hopeless Records, **THE WEIGHT OF THE WORLD**. In an online interview, I read that it was difficult during the recording of the album.

CASTELLANI: I could go on for days about the recording of the album just because there is a lot to vent about. I think I've pretty much put it all behind me and can now look back and laugh, but the experience was pretty intense, dude. To sum it all up, we were homeless in Oakland, flat broke and living in our van and sharing a chicken between five starving guys and a potato salad EVERY day for a month straight during winter.

SKRATCH: I really like "Chasing You" and "Root of All Evil". Which is your favorite song lyrically and favorite one instrumentally?

CASTELLANI: Lyrically, I would have to say my favorite song is "A Sign of Life", because when I wrote that song, I just remember it being a really easy process because I was so inspired at the time and the lyrics just came to me like I was telling a story rather than sitting and thinking of clever hooks and plays on words. Musically, I like "Not Guilty", because it makes me wanna dance or start a fight club.

NURAL

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SKRATCH: What is the songwriting process like for Nural?

CASTELLANI: The songwriting process is different with certain songs, but I like to picture it as building a house. I usually write the foundation and basic verse-chorus-bridge music, and I just hand it to my band, and they go crazy and decorate Martha Stewart style. With all my music, I'm inspired by the ones closest to me: my friends, my family, and most definitely God.

SKRATCH: You guys have a video out for "The Curse" directed by Graham Baglagon. What was the inspiration behind the video?

CASTELLANI: We suck at trying to

remember or even pronounce their names. We're trying to learn the language, though, because it seems unfair showing up in a country and making it a nightmare for locals when they can't understand you.

SKRATCH: How are the crowds in Japan?

CASTELLANI: I'm a patriot and I love my country, but the kids in Japan are so much more grateful and show so much more respect. They just straight-up LOVE music out there. There are no scenes or designated shows like "metal night" or anything like that. Our friends from Japan who we toured with are called IQ20, and they're totally punk; and while we played

CASTELLANI: I'm not sure what the agenda is, but I would absolutely love to kick back and write a record that blows THE WEIGHT OF THE WORLD to pieces; and with the songs we've already got in the making, that shouldn't be hard.

SKRATCH: On the Website under the individual band bios, Aaron has a quote: "The radio was made for the music, and now the music is made for the radio." Is that something that you guys all kind of agree on?

CASTELLANI: I'm pretty sure Aaron stole that quote. [Laughs] But anyways, I totally agree with that quote. Sadly, we're our own worst enemies in this case. We wrote this record the way we wanted it

SKRATCH: I noticed that you guys seem to mention that DREAMCATCHER is the worst movie ever, which I thought was kinda funny. If you were to put together the ultimate worst movie ever, what would the storyline be, and who would star in it?

CASTELLANI: [Laughs] This is the best question I have ever read in my life. Well, my ultimate crappy movie would definitely need Keanu Reeves, and it would need a storyline similar to that of BOOGEYMAN and DARKNESS FALLS. I'm ordering everyone to go rent these movies. I dare you to sit through them. The weird thing about crappy movies is that I always leave the theatre ripping my hair out and totally pissed, and

"...I COULD GIVE YOU SO MUCH TO TALK ABOUT—FOR WEEKS, MONTHS EVEN."

think of cool ideas for merch, pictures, or anything related to that. We always get bummed looking at other bands' awesome pictures and wonder, "Why didn't we think of that?" We focus a lot more on the music department. But for the video, it was our manager, John Kang, who took charge and had a whole story ready to rock. It was freaking amazing. That guy is on his toes 24/7. Good job, John.

SKRATCH: You guys just got back from Japan! I was in Tokyo for a few days in June, and it was gorgeous. How exciting. Have you been there before? Did you have a favorite venue or town?

CASTELLANI: Yeah, Japan is awesome. We have been there before, but we only played one show on our last visit. This time we played 10. Every single show was off the hook and totally rad! We had a couple of favorite towns, but we can't

alongside them every night, there were also ska bands, metal bands, and all sorts of bands on the same bill—and kids went insane for every band.

SKRATCH: Anything lined up to tour overseas?

CASTELLANI: We are coming up on some U.K. dates that we're all super stoked on, because we're playing with one of our all-time favorite bands, Voodoo Glow Skulls, on every date! We used to be a ska band, so of course Voodoo was a huge influence back in the day.

SKRATCH: For the fall, you have a tour lined up with The Higher, Black Out Pact, Amber Pacific, and Still Life Projector. What do you guys have in store for 2006?

and had it very diverse and different, but when we took it to production, there was A LOT taken out and simplified. I might get in trouble for saying this, but I would love to redo the entire record without any of the changes and re-name it THE WAY WE WANTED IT. The next record, in my opinion, will be a much more accurate portrayal of what we're really all about.

SKRATCH: What have you learned from the beginning of band practices to today, touring your debut album on Hopeless Records?

CASTELLANI: We have all learned a lot. We've learned that trust is extremely important, and whoever said it said it best when saying, "If you want something done right, do it yourself."

yet I love seeing them because they are so entertaining. I could give you so much to talk about—for weeks, months even.

SKRATCH: Where would you like to see the band in five years?

CASTELLANI: Bigger than U2.

Thanks, Kyle, for taking the time to do this interview. Catch the band on tour with Still Life Projector and The Higher in October. For Nural music and tour dates, please check out www.nuralmusic.com.

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Mannitis
By Mike SOS

From relative unknowns to MTV reality-show superstars, Mannitis is a band that got a big-time break thanks to THE BATTLE FOR OZZFEST. Now they are on tour and have their scorching Century Media debut album, *SLEEP IN YOUR GRAVE*, in stores.

Vocalist Jake Sirokman explained via phone how he plans on erasing the stigma that high exposure can give, as well as how the band formed and what to look forward to from this fiery quintet.

SKRATCH: How did Mannitis form, and how did you guys come up with the name?

JAKE: Basically, it formed in the fall of 2000. We are all buddies from high school and we all had our things going on. I was working at a pizza joint, and I was hit up by my bass player, my drummer, and who was my guitar player at the time; they basically asked me if I was still jamming. I told them I was just trying to start my life and get away from the punk rock and the hardcore shit. They asked me to come by and check out their stuff and see if I'd like it. I went over there, saw it, liked it, and thought it might be pretty fun to start up a band again. So, we just started playing everywhere. That's how we formed—you know, just for the fun of it, a love of music. The name was pretty much just us fucking around. We were just up at the house. You know, every summer, all of the preying mantises just come around.... It was nothing from the religious side of it. We are jokers, so we didn't want to put too much thought into it; we didn't want this 10-word name, you know what I mean? So we were just Mannitis, and it caught on.

SKRATCH: Where and how did you record *SLEEP IN YOUR GRAVE* with, and do you have any interesting stories that came from the sessions that you'd like to share?

JAKE: We recorded with a guy named Cameron Webb. He was at Naples Studios in Santa Ana, CA. Basically, we just knew him through a friend. We had heard his work, and he did not do too much with the hardcore metal stuff, and that's why we kind of [wanted] him—just so we'd have fresh ears for our style of music. The album he did before was the brand new Social Distortion. The production and engineering on it was phenomenal; and he was a great guy. We were only supposed to be there for two or three weeks, but we ended up spending a month with him, and we had a good time. We just fucking drank, partied, and smoked. He was just a laid back dude. Hopefully, we can work with him again in the future, because he's very, very talented.

SKRATCH: Which song do you feel was the easiest to record? the hardest to record? the one you felt came out the best?

JAKE: I'd have to say the easiest was "My Enemy", just because that was the oldest song we had and we just threw it in there just because it was our root, it was more of our history. I would have to say the hardest song was "Weathered Soul", because that brings out more of our overseas, Swedish/Netherlands metal sound. I was very picky with the vocals, and I think we did that song like 30 fucking times. That one kicked my ass, so I think it came out the best on the album. That and "Acts of Redemption"

are my two favorites.

SKRATCH: Now, THE BATTLE FOR OZZFEST was a major turning point for you guys. Did it all happen as you expected?

JAKE: It really surprised us. I was just really stoked and thankful. When we first tried out for the whole thing, it wasn't necessarily an MTV thing; we just thought we were trying out for Ozzfest tryouts and all that shit. We started to turn our papers in, and we were like, "What is this shit?" And people were like, "Oh, it's a reality TV show." We thought we weren't even going to make it, because we are just such a hard band. I thought MTV were going to go for some of the more melodic stuff—which they ended up doing. But they stepped it up a notch, and we are very proud to be where we are. I'd like to let people know we didn't get here just because of an overnight TV show. We had been touring for two or three years even before we tried out for the thing, and we had put out our own album. We fucking kept striving to be the best we could. We are people who just like to go out and talk to fans. To this day, I'll go to a show like a kid who's 15 years old: I buy the merchandise and I'll buy the album that I can't afford.... Basically, we are very thankful. We are out here for the kids and for the love of music—and we are here for the long run.

SKRATCH: What did you walk away with from the entire experience? Like, what is the one piece of advice or something you realized?

JAKE: Not to give up. If you are feeling down, that is when you write an even better song. When someone in your family's passed away and you just feel like you just don't want to do it anymore, that's another time you can say, "I don't give a fuck—it's time to make a name for yourself." We

just lost our drummer and guitar player about a week-and-a-half ago. They weren't feeling it anymore, and we just sat down. You can't make them do something they don't want to do, so it kind of gave us more encouragement to step up and say, "Fuck them. Now we'll work 20 times harder just because we are down in the dumps." We thought we had to cancel this tour that we are on, but instead we found two guys, jammed for about four days, and said, "Fuck it—we are still going out." So that right there inspires us. This is when you got to stick to your guns.

SKRATCH: What did you learn to steer clear from the entire experience? What did you notice that you definitely won't do, something that you just said, "This isn't for me"—the lifestyle or whatever it is?

"...If you write a song, don't do it because it might make someone else happy..."

JAKE: Changing your style, doing something for somebody else. If you write a song, don't do it because it might make someone else happy or make you bigger or that much closer to the goal. It's like, if you really love what you play, then just do that. That's why I was so excited: because we're one of the harder bands in the competition, and we came out third place—you know, only beaten out by two softer, radio-type bands.

SKRATCH: How do you live with the stigma of being, like, the reality-show entity? Have there been any uncomfortable experiences that you've had due to your exposure from audiences or other bands?

JAKE: It's been hit and miss. I mean, we have just as many fans who like us from being on the show as we do who hate us. And the people who are

hating on us can hate all they want until they watch us live; and if they still hate us when we are live, I don't give a fuck. We are still going to be doing this if we sell, you know, 100 CDs or if we sell 100,000 CDs. We are going to get up on that stage, and we are going to do what we do—what we've been doing for five years

SKRATCH: What can we expect from you guys for the rest of 2005?

JAKE: We are going to do a lot more traveling. We are going to Europe in November with The Haunted and God Forbid. We've got 30 shows in 30 days, hitting France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, and London. Right now we are on tour with Eyes of Fire, 2 Cents, and our good friends Burden of Guilt around the U.S. Then, we are going to go home and we are

going to pick up our new guitar player and drummer who we've got waiting for us and play a hometown show, see what's up with the family and girlfriend, and then probably head right back out to the end of September. I don't know, but we may be possibly going out with Fear Factory in October. That would be fucking unbelievable. That's a really big name for us. So, keep your eyes out on www.mannitis.com or myspace.com/mannitis.

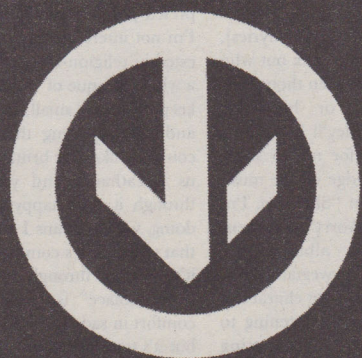
SKRATCH: Do you guys have any final words for the readers?

JAKE: Not really, man. Just support your fucking local bands, and get your asses out to the shows.

Mannitis



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ION DISSONANCE
By Janelle Jones

Quebec's Ion Dissonance (whose name suits them quite well) are an insane five-piece who peddle mind-blowing... (uh, to use the simplest term) extreme music. These guys play a mean mixture of EVERYTHING you could imagine: spazztastic metal and hardcore, grind, math...and they prove beyond a shadow of a doubt they've got the technical prowess. Vocalist/lyricist Gabriel relates that sometimes in the crowd up front there'll just be guys staring at the guitarists trying to figure out how the jarring songs are played (a challenging task, indeed). Anyway, he says their latest, *SOLACE*, is less complex than their debut, *BREATHING IS IRRELEVANT*...but to this "untrained ear," that's hard to imagine!

Now signed with Abacus, the guys (who early on had trouble crossing the Canadian-American border because they weren't with a large enough label (and sometimes were treated as terrorists in the wake of 9/11) don't have these pesky problems anymore and can get their asses to the States more easily than ever. A good thing for both them AND us, for (according to Gabriel) they do QUITE well here, as opposed to in their hometown.

SKRATCH: I don't have the lyrics [for SOLACE], so: what ARE you screaming about?

GABRIEL: [Laughter] Well, it's not a conceptual album.

All the songs are kinda separate entities; they're not really linked together. But the thing that's weird about my lyrics is that I don't necessarily talk about violent stuff or stuff that would normally fit with that kind of music. My lyrics would fit over dark, ambient music or trip-hop or something really remote from metal. It still has a pretty negative vibe to it, but I think it makes a good paradox between the music and my lyrics. [...] The lyrics [are] all small stories. I only write small stories; they're not really lyrics for the sake of being lyrics. You can get into it, and if you read the entire album from start to finish, you can see it's really personal stuff in general, even though it's pretty metaphoric from time to time. It's stuff I went through in life that people can relate to.

SKRATCH: So, do you write anything else [i.e., besides songs]?

GABRIEL: I write constantly. I studied literature a couple years ago, and I read all the time. I write in French [and] English. I write essays. I tried to write my own novel before (when I was a bit younger). I think I started about four novels. [Laughs] For some reason after a couple chapters I'm not interested anymore, so I just drop the whole thing and start over. Writing lyrics is easier for me, 'cause I'll write something short, and it'll be efficient. But I can write poems. Yeah, I'm basically [really] into writing and reading in general. For instance, there's a song called "Lecturing Raskolnikov"-it's essentially an [excerpt] I took from Dostoyevsky's *CRIME AND PUNISHMENT*. If kids don't know about this book, maybe if they're interested in the lyrics, they'll try to find the book and read [it], because I think it's a milestone of literature. It's one of the best novels that's been written. I'm hoping that through the lyrics people will be interested in various other writings.

SKRATCH: Nice. Do you say in the liner notes that it's from that book?

GABRIEL: Oh yeah: I mention this is an excerpt from *CRIME AND PUNISHMENT*, but that it's been translated and slightly distorted by me. [Laughter]

SKRATCH: I like the song titles. You come up with all them, I guess?

GABRIEL: Yeah. Well, on the first album, there was the song "The Death of One Man Is a Tragedy, the Death of 10,000 Is a Statistic". That's a quote from Stalin, the Russian dictator. But apart from that [one], I come up with all the song titles. But sometimes in the lyrics there are quotes. I use quotes a lot or parts [from] various artists who nobody knows or cares about within the metal/hardcore genre. For instance, in "A Prelude of

Things Worse to Come", where I say "How socially dead of me," that's something that's been said in an album by Alias, a dark trip-hop artist. (It's really good electronic music.) On the side [of the printed lyrics], there'll be a notation saying it's from Alias, so that if people get into [my lyrics], they'll try to check out who Alias is; and even though it's not metal or hardcore, hopefully they'll like it. It's important for me to share my knowledge of the musical field. In "Shut Up, I'm Trying to Worry", I'm mentioning an album from Ulver, a Norwegian artist. One of the main characters [in my song] is listening to this music while getting drunk. [The lyrics are] a whole story about that. I keep on making links between various artists like that. [...]

SKRATCH: You said before that your lyrics are kinda in contrast to the music. Well, that's true of even just the title of SOLACE.

GABRIEL: Yeah, there you go. A lot of people ask me why such a quiet title to something that is straightforward. But that's me, because I don't wanna write about butchery. [Laughs] I have one song that could be interpreted politically-influenced, but in general I'm not interested in politics; I'm not interested in religion-I'm just interested in doing a whole critique of humankind in general. I keep on taking small, insignificant moments and just exploring them to the fullest. It could be, like, this brutal kind of music is for us a catharsis and you can find solace through it. I'm happy with the music I'm doing, which means I gain comfort through that style-but it's comfort through sorrow, or it's comfort through violence. I think the word "solace" is really powerful. To find comfort in sadness or sorrow is kinda weird-but it's totally me. Sometimes when I was in a really depressed mood or felt a negative vibe, instead of being smashed by it, I was always taking it and being constructive with it, always writing interesting stuff. That's when you write the best stuff ever. You just drink a beer and you go into this whole mental thing, in the dark, quiet or with some weird music, and just write good stuff. I

wanted to actually do something more with [SOLACE].

Eventually, if I have the time, I want to make a link with all

the lyrics and make a huge story with all those lyrics included, a really big story that would be in a separate booklet. I would simply title it *TO CARVE DEEPER AND FIND SOLACE* or something like that, since one of the songs is "You're Not Carving Deep Enough". Something like that-as if you were to uncover why I would find solace through this.

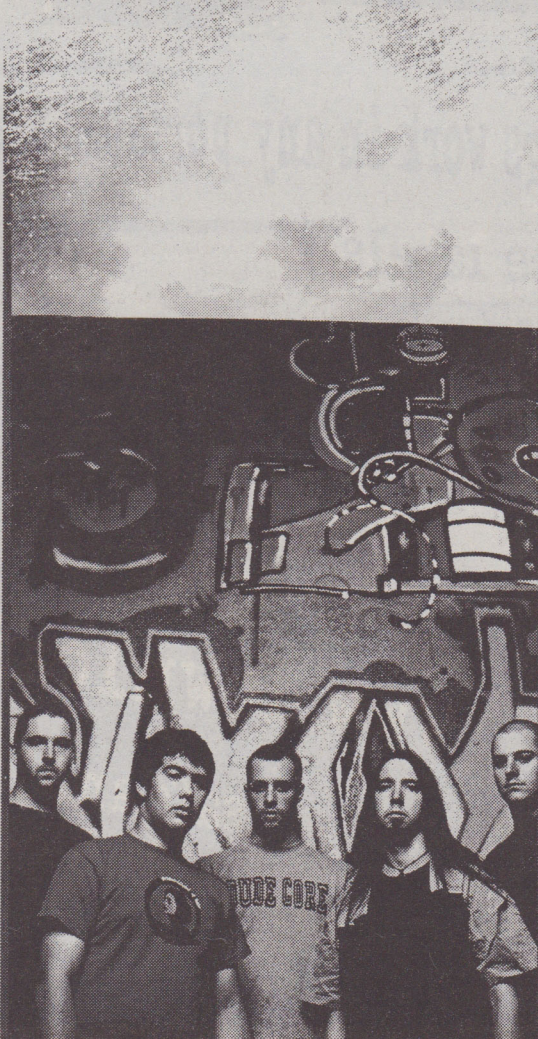
SKRATCH: But like before you said it's not all, like, a concept....

GABRIEL: That's true. I've done those lyrics at various times. Some are quite old, some are relatively new; and at the end you can tell which songs have been written in the same era, because they're more similar in general. But if I wanted I could turn this whole idea into a conceptual album. I thought about it, and I was making links between the same character [who] is always talking about himself. [The album] could be put into various orders and [have a narrative] logic in it.

SKRATCH: On the tour you have coming up, are you gonna play all new songs in your set?

GABRIEL: Of course not; we have to keep a couple old ones. There are some songs people truly like, and they're expecting us to play them. We started doing those new songs a couple shows ago-not even: I think we did a week with those songs-and people were reacting really good to them; but for some reason people are always asking [for old] songs. I think that's normal. It takes a while before you actually know one of our songs by heart-so if you do, you wanna hear them.

ION DISSONANCE



SKRATCH: This is true. [Laughs]

GABRIEL People were into BREATHING IS IRRELEVANT and listened to that album over and over again because they're so complicated so that when it would come up live they'd know everything there is to know about the songs. But I think the new record is gonna be even more beneficial for us to play. But of course we have to throw in a couple old songs, that's for sure.

SKRATCH: I guess you can't play the last song on the new one. That'll take up the whole set.

GABRIEL: [Laughter] No, we won't play that one. We had a song like that on the first record, too. The last song wasn't THAT long, but it was a slow song. It was all about atmosphere; it wasn't really about just moshing and stuff like that. And we're still playing that one live, 'cause it breaks from the entire set just to have this one song thrown in. But like you said, "Prelude" is way too long. Also, there's some stuff in it that you can only do in the studio. Like, at some point the guitar drops so low that we had to record just this one note so that it could be that low.

SKRATCH: What, at the end? That part's awesome.

GABRIEL: Yeah. We're tuned really low. We're A-flat. I think it's at least a huge drop from that, and we had a hard time keeping it perfect. And once we did, we recorded it that way. But it's

something that cannot really be done [live], because on our guitar we're not even tuned that low. [Laughs] We couldn't pull that one off, unfortunately.

"...AT SOME POINT THE GUITAR DROPS SO LOW THAT WE HAD TO RECORD JUST THIS ONE NOTE SO THAT IT COULD BE THAT LOW."



SKRATCH: I like how you said that you had a similar song on the first record. I like when bands that are crazy do that somewhat sludgy one, throw that in there.

GABRIEL: I like it, too. We all love that kind of stuff, but first and foremost we're a straightforward, violent band. We're never gonna do just an album like that. We did talk about eventually doing a mini-CD or an EP that would be entirely one big-ass, long song, like 25 to 30 minutes. It would be as long as an album, but it would be all slow stuff, maybe with some acoustic parts-stuff we've never done. And not because we're not able to, but just because I don't think it's quite the time yet. We're still trying to establish our name [with a particular] style of music, so we're not gonna be experimental all the way. But why not? One day we might do something like that, with different strings and cellos and stuff like that. We're into that kind of stuff.

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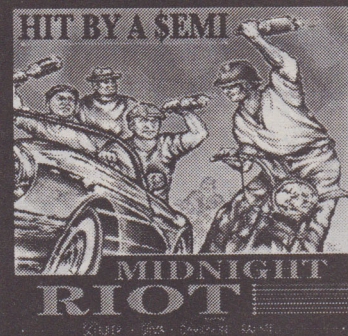
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SLAB
By Marcia Taylor

Southern California's Inland Empire has produced quite a few bands, such as Face to Face, Alien Ant Farm, Atomic Bombs, and Narcoleptic Youth. Punk trio Slab comes from one of the area's older cities, Upland. The group has been playing together for 10 years and just finished recording its latest album (their first in five years), **SOCIETY AS A FRIENDLY PUSHER**, for Onset Records. Not that the guys have been sitting doing

Slab is Topher on drums, HeFe on bass, and Daniel on guitar and vocals.

SKRATCH: I noticed in your band bio that two of you are original band members. How and where did you two meet?

DANIEL: In 1990, Chris[topher] and I were both in high school. I was a senior, and he was a junior. I'd played with a couple of cats here and there. I met Chris, we talked and saw we had the same musical tastes, so we became a band. At first, we played covers—Minor Threat and other old stuff. Then we picked up a bass player and started the band in 1992.

SKRATCH: What other bands do you like

going through all kinds of different names. We wanted to be a band with a lot of balls, and "slab" is "balls" backwards. We used to use the two Ls [at first], but we stopped.

SKRATCH: You've been around for quite a while. What else have you released prior to this album?

DANIEL: Two 7"s, demos, one six-song EP. We've always been a slow-writing band. It took us forever to get this record.

SKRATCH: Were all the songs on the new disc written recently?

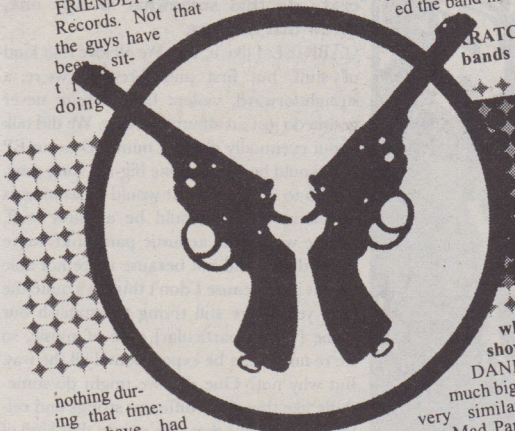
DANIEL: We took a couple of songs from our EP, "Agony of Defeat" came out in '98.

SKRATCH: Any particular songs you'd like to talk about on the album?

DANIEL: This release is our most angry and rough around the edges musically and lyrically. It's a lot more streetwise and in your face. After 13 years, we've found the direction we like most. We're also getting a lot better at songwriting.

SKRATCH: It seems to me from reading your lyrics that a lot of the songs on the album are political.

DANIEL: No, just a few. "Rain on Your Parade" is a little bit about 9/11.



nothing during that time: they have had their music featured on numerous compilations, as well as on skate, snowboard, and BMX videos. I remember seeing Slab play several years ago at Chain Reaction in Anaheim and really enjoying their set. In fact, I have a Slab sticker on my sewing machine. (Hey, it's a punk-rock sewing machine!)

whose influence might show up in Slab's music?

DANIEL: We're all pretty much big rock fans; our tastes are very similar. We like old Bad Religion, Mad Parade.... We're also really into hardcore stuff—melodic hardcore, especially.

SKRATCH: Is there any particular reason you chose the name "Slab"? It's so short and basic. I actually think it's quite a memorable name.

DANIEL: That's kind of a funny story. We were

It's the first song we ever wrote. There's about four years of writing on the new record.

SKRATCH: Were you in the studio long recording it?

DANIEL: No, we pumped it out in two days. We work really well together; we know each other so well.

SKRATCH: How did you come up with the album title "SOCIETY AS A FRIENDLY PUSHER"?

DANIEL: I got a DUI a couple of years ago. You have to go through alcohol school, and one night the topic of discussion was "society as a friendly pusher."

SKRATCH: Do you all contribute to writing lyrics?

DANIEL: No, I write most. Every once in awhile, we have a little songwriting party. We're writing more together now than before.

SKRATCH: Has Slab done much touring?

SLAB

punk, metal, indie

hardcore, psychobilly

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DANIEL:
We did a couple of trips in the last two months: Colorado, Vegas, Arizona, Wyoming.... We'll be going out a lot more this fall and winter. We've been touring for almost seven years, and we'd rather deal with the cold than with the heat!

SKRATCH: I noticed in your liner notes that you thanked some clubs in places like South Dakota and Wisconsin. Do you have any favorite places you like to play?

DANIEL: A lot of clubs have been really cool to us. They let us do shows on short notice. We like Colorado a lot, especially Denver and Ft. Collins. Our favorite place to play in Ft. Collins is the Pizza Bar. We sometimes see some of The Descendents there. Bill Stevenson has a studio there, the Blasting Room, and we had our CD mastered there.

SKRATCH: Do you have any strong feelings about playing locally versus playing out of state?

DANIEL: We do a lot better on the road. We've played a lot in this area; maybe we've saturated it. As far as out of state, we've saturated that. Kids will drive about 100 miles to see a show. People who live in Southern California can see a different band every night.

SKRATCH:
That's what most local bands that I've interviewed over the years say. Any local bands that you particularly like playing with?

DANIEL: I'm actually playing guitar in Mad Parade. I've known those guys about five years now and been a fan for 15 years. Another band that is really good is Sixth Sense from Riverside. They remind me a lot of Suicidal Tendencies on their first album; they've got that skate punk-rock sound.

DANIEL:
Everything loops every 20 years, like they say. A lot of older bands are getting back together with the original members, and a new gen-

"AFTER 13 YEARS, WE'VE FOUND THE DIRECTION WE LIKE MOST."

SKRATCH: Remember how back in the mid '90s all the bands were punk bands and it was so easy to find a punk show to go to? Now it seems like it's difficult to find a good punk show. What do you think (since you've played in a punk band throughout the '90s until now)?

DANIEL: There's not a whole lot of punk bands left. Metalcore is what's popular these days, like Avenged Sevenfold.

SKRATCH: I think punk will eventually come back, though, like it did in the '90s. What do you think?

eration of kids is getting recruited. They're getting to see bands that they were too young to see when the bands were originally playing.

SKRATCH: Is there anything else you'd like to say before we wrap this up?

DANIEL: We're really stoked on the new album. We'll be doing lots of shows. The record just got into stores two weeks ago. And we're on Myspace now. It's great for networking. You can let everyone know about shows [there]. We will be posting all of our show dates there soon. Touring is our favorite way to get our name out and let people know about the record.

Thanks, Daniel, for taking the time to talk with me. It was fun. I hope I get a chance to come out and see you guys at one of your local shows! For anyone who would like to learn more about Slab, check out their Myspace profile or visit them at www.slabarmy.com or www.onsetrecords.com.

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Thee Minks
By J. Wallace

Philadelphia's Thee Minks are a three-piece garage/punk outfit with songs about as subtle as a kiss from a toilet plunger. In other words, required listening. The group's first CD, **ARE YOU READY YET?**, is out now on Steel Cage Records.

Lead singer/bassist Liz Lixx, guitarist Hope Diamond, and drummer Playthang make no bones about what Thee Minks really want.

SKRATCH: Most of the songs on ARE YOU READY YET? are about getting it on, wanting to get it on or not being able to get it on. Are Thee Minks perpetually horny?

PLAYTHANG: Well, perpetually drunk, anyway. Perpetually horny depends on several things, including (but not limited to) the amount of drinking, the looks of the crowd, and the amount of tea-bagging that occurs throughout the night.

HOPE: Yeah, yeah, I'd say we are. We're getting our needs met pretty well lately; but you write songs about what's on your mind. And what fun!

LIZ: Yes, yes, yes. Playthang, especially. He is constantly trying to dry hump Hope and me. It became such a nuisance onstage that we often have to chain him to a wall to keep his drummer-ass in line. Interestingly enough, he is not picky about who gropes him: it could be a big burly biker guy on coke, a very effeminate man...

PLAYTHANG: I'll let anyone cop a feel for a free beer.

LIZ: Hope and I are horny, too, but we are much more discerning about who is allowed to invade our pantaloons. We have been known to spank boys with our instruments.

SKRATCH: Even with all those turned-on songs, you somehow manage to stop short of going for the "full monty."

HOPE: It's not really on purpose. Innuendo is fun 'cause it leaves something to the imagination. It's like the girl in the negligee, as opposed to the naked girl. We didn't really have a plan in mind when this all started; it just sorta comes out that way.

LIZ: We don't have a collective master plan. Mine is to eliminate the hang-over, hippies, and wretchedly cheerful people who greet you in the morning when you are waking up on some floor with a dehydration headache by happily exclaiming, "Good morning, sunshine!" Hope's plotting to create a world filled with tall, skinny, hairless men (e.g., Iggy Pop) who paint her toenails racy red while feeding her grapes and wine and spinning Aussie bands on vinyl. The Playthang's master plan is whatever Hope and I say it is.

SKRATCH: Do the songs get dirtier live?
PLAYTHANG: Well, I believe "Shut Up and Fist Me" has occurred at least once,

among other bastardizations of "Shut Up and Kiss Me".

LIZ: I'd love to say, "Shut up, boy, and let me stick your poop shoot with a leather strap-on while you squeal like the pig that you are," but it's too many words to fit. And we can get raunchy live, what with Hope's boobs and the Playthang's basic slutty nature. One time in band camp, I was Frenching Joan Jett AND Angelina Jolie simultaneously, and Hope tried to butt in, so we ended up fighting and rolling around on the floor and ripping off each other's clothes, and then Hope started lick my left inner thigh with her supple, pink tongue, and Angelina and Joan started moaning and touching themselves; but then Playthang walked by and ruined the moment with his foul smell. Everyone ran away.

SKRATCH: Tender moments like that should be cherished forever.
HOPE: Playthang says he never gets hit on when he's playing in his other band, Mondo Topless. He gets action when playing in Thee Minks.

SKRATCH: Thee Minks have more than a few years on many of their teen punk contemporaries. That's not terribly unusual for punk. Ages ago, Iron Prostate released the instant classic LOUD, FAST, AND AGING RAPIDLY. But some of us (ahem) don't feel quite that way about being 30, 40, and beyond. If Mick Jagger can prance around doing his mindless nonsense at 60, why feel old? How does it feel to be representing those of us in the 30+ hood?

LIZ: Rock 'n' roll is ageless, baby! I feel like a 13-year-old rocker boy trapped in a woman's body. It's all about energy, not age. We love going to all-ages shows; and they're super fun to play, as well. At least kids move around and yelp. And everyone knows the youth are our future...which could be pretty scary, now that I think about it, what with all the tattooed, pierced, Manic Panic-haired kids listening to freaking Lincoln Park and the rank, pussy ooze of Avril Lavigne. And what's with all the super baggy pants? And Good Charlotte is punk? Lee Ving (of Fear) would never date Hillary Duff! Abuse her, yes, but not date! But those are not the people attending the shows I go to, thank God. Most of the kids we meet are cool, independent kids with brains. And some of those little punk-rock boys are yum yum yummy to gaze upon.

HOPE: We'll play all-ages shows once in a while. It's been a lot of fun, and the kids have been really receptive. But I think our friends locally are a little bit older. They're people who have been going to shows for 20 years and still find that a part of their lives-here in Philly or anywhere. [...] I'd say that's where we fit in: for people who have music as a big part of their lives. They haven't stopped going to shows. We do it 'cause it's fun. We're not constantly on tour; we try to get out of town every other month-and it's worth doing.

THEE
MINKS

SKRATCH: Speaking of tours, how do you survive your rock 'n' roll lifestyle? Any advice for the pimple-punks out there looking to make it big in the dirty world of music?

HOPE: Do it because you love it; don't do it because you want to be famous or make money. If you're good and if you're lucky, maybe it will happen. I've seen so many people burn out and hate it because...Of course they loved it, but their primary focus was, "We gotta make it."

Those people burn out fast.

PLAYTHANG: Learn to sleep sitting up in a rickety van. Keep the toothpaste and the ass cream in separate bags. You don't want to mix these up. If your band has a gee-tar player, stop everything and try again. And most of all, learn to both feel and embrace the hate.



LIZ: To save grief: don't expect to get paid, don't forget that fun should always be the driving factor, and it's always good to top off the day with a generous helping of booze and decrepit sex. Hate is really productive, too, and highly underrated.

SKRATCH: So what's ahead for Thee Minks? Your first CD is out, and you're hooked up with Steel Cage Records. Plans for the future?

The Blow Goes and Beretta 76 (both from Philly), and The Downbeat 5 (from Boston). Hopefully, we will not relive the night where someone booked us and when we got to the club, we weren't even listed to play-and it was all emo bands. **HOPE:** Steel Cage is local, in Philly. All three of us have known [Steel Cage] for a

"LEARN TO SLEEP SITTING UP IN A RICKETY VAN. KEEP THE TOOTHPASTE AND THE ASS CREAM IN SEPARATE BAGS."

PLAYTHANG: Well, for years I've been looking for a cabin in the woods where I can make my pipe bombs in peace-but I won't go into that. We'll be heading to NYC for a couple shows and a radio appearance. I'm hoping to one-up our last visit, where I was hit on by both sexes and tea-bagged by the 'big, burly owner of the club we played. It was a special night for me.

LIZ: Right now we're concentrating on writing new songs and promoting our CD. We just had a CD-release show in Philly and played with three amazing bands:

They heard some buzz about us, came out to see us, and there it is! They've been really terrific. Now that we've spent all the time recording the CD, we're pretty sick of [those songs], so we're writing some new ones. Hopefully, we'll do another record and play some more places we haven't played.

Thee Minks are plugging their new CD **ARE YOU READY YET?** and playing shows in and around Philadelphia. Check them out at www.theeminks.com.

- Oct. 1 Davey's Uptown, Kansas City, MO
- Oct. 2 creely crawl St. Louis, MO
- Oct. 5 Nite Cap Lounge Chicago, IL
- Oct. 6 Alvins Detroit, MI
- Oct. 7 Asbury Lanes, Asbury Park, NJ
- Oct. 8 Midway Cafe, Jamaica Plain, MA
- Oct. 9 Rodeo Bar & Grill, New York, NY
- Oct. 11 Wonderland, Richmond, VA
- Oct. 12 The Double Door Inn, Charlotte, NC
- Oct. 14 The Drunken Unicorn, Atlanta, GA
- Oct. 15 Sector 7G, Augusta, GA
- Oct. 16 The hair of the Dog, Nashville, TN
- Oct. 18 Green Door, Oklahoma City, OK
- Oct. 19 tea lounge, El Paso, TX
- Oct. 20 El Morro Theatre, Gallup, NM
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mommy & daddy

Mommy and Daddy
Interview by Denise Blaz

Mommy and Daddy is a completely original band (I can't think of any similarities to anyone on the top of my head, anyway) out of Manhattan. Vivian Sarra and Edmond Hallas make up the group. Although they've been in existence for four years now, DUEL AT DAWN is their first real release in the U.S.

Below is the interview that I conducted with Vivian (which just so happened to be done on their fifth year wedding anniversary).

SKRATCH: You guys recently played a show at CMJ. How was that?

VIVIAN: It was really fun. There was a lot of out of town people. I didn't tell any of my friends that we were playing, so I got there and I was like, "I really hope people show up." But it was sold out. It was really fun.

SKRATCH: What shows have you been to?

VIVIAN: I went to a couple of shows last night. I went to go see The New Pornographers.

SKRATCH: Is there a band that you really want to see?

VIVIAN: Edmond really wants to see Dressy Bessy. He's dying to see them. We heard their new record, and I think it's really good. He's going to take me tomorrow. From there, we're going to go see Metric, which is a band that I love to see. I love them. They write really good songs. They're playing with one of my favorite bands, The (International) Noise Conspiracy.

SKRATCH: I really like them. I think they're great live.

VIVIAN: I've seen them five times.

SKRATCH: You live in New York, New York, right?

VIVIAN: Yeah, we live in Manhattan. I think it's funny, because a lot of people write that we're from Brooklyn, but we only lived there for two months.

SKRATCH: How do you think living there influences your music?

VIVIAN: It influences us a lot. We moved here right after I got out of college. Even though we've always been doing music, we really started to focus on it when we moved up here. Mommy and Daddy started right after September 11th. We had been writing music for our-

selves, and then we decided to start making music for other people. We've been making music for a long time separately-even before we met each other. Today is our fifth anniversary of being married!

SKRATCH: That's awesome. Congratulations.

VIVIAN: Thanks.

SKRATCH: What do you think is the best part of the city?

VIVIAN: Well, another reason we moved here was because I hate driving-and so does Edmond-so it's really funny that we tour seven months out of the year. We're in a car for so long, and it sucks. But, you know, we'll deal.

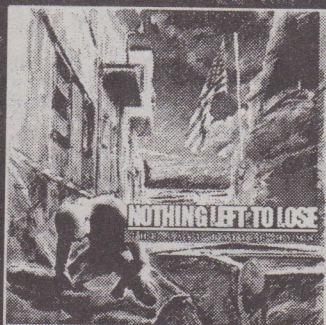
SKRATCH: Your CD hasn't even come out yet. What do you want to say about it?

VIVIAN: Well, this will be our third real release. We had one album out in the U.K. and a couple of 7"s. And then here we had an EP come out in February. So, this is the first thing that people will really hear in the U.S. The U.K. album was \$25 on Amazon, and I was just telling people not to buy it because it was so expensive. This is our real first U.S. release, and we're really excited. We've been waiting to put something out here forever. We recorded it in a week. We went on tour to support FIGHTING STYLE KILLING PANDA in February for two weeks, and then we came back to New York for a week and recorded the album. DUEL AT DAWN is the first real thing that we got to do ourselves. We didn't have a label to answer to, because our label totally gave us creative control. It wasn't self-produced; we recorded it with a friend. It was done in

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apartment about 10 blocks away from where we live. It was pretty much seven days of working on it with no sleep. We worked so hard on it.

SKRATCH: I really like the track "Way West Way". What is that song about?
VIVIAN: Oh, cool. Thanks. Well, Edmond wrote the lyrics to that one. He'll tell you that it's about something else. My songs are kind of about some topics, and his tend to be more political and the music industry. I don't even know what that one was about. I think that one is about the music industry.

SKRATCH: What were some of your favorite bands growing up?
VIVIAN: The first band that I saw live was Fugazi, and I didn't like them.

SKRATCH: Really?
VIVIAN: Yeah. I was in the ninth grade, and I was really into electronic music. I pretty much listened to a lot of electronic stuff growing up. I also listened to a lot of Bikini Kill, Joy Division, and Depeche Mode. At the same time, I liked a lot of pop. I liked a lot of Elvis and a lot of oldies, like The Everly Brothers and such. Edmond likes a lot of stuff that I do, but he's a little bit more into hardcore and punk. I remember I was dying to go see Bikini Kill, but I had to sneak out to go see Fugazi. It was a free show, and I was really excited; but when I came back home I got in a lot of trouble, and I basically didn't go see another show until I was a junior in high school.

SKRATCH: In an interview, you said that women who make music inspire you. Who are some of your favorites?

VIVIAN: I like Nina Simone; she's one of my favorite singers. I really like anybody Parton is one of my favorites, and Dolly Cher... Just people who have great voices. A lot of those women didn't write their own songs, Dolly wrote her own songs. I like women who can write good songs. I think that's really rare. So yeah, Dolly. Dolly's my favorite.

SKRATCH: Can you tell me a random fact about yourself?

VIVIAN: Every time I go on tour, I quit a job. I'm about to quit my job right now.

SKRATCH: So, you guys are going to start a tour?

VIVIAN: Yeah, we are going to start October 1st. We're going to go down to Florida and play a bunch of shows with The Gossip. Edmond and I didn't want to tour in the dead of summer or the dead of winter. We both hate driving, and everybody has these horrible stories about how their car breaks down on tour. We wanted to avoid up our equipment when it's snowing or when it's 95 degrees is crappy. So, we're doing a fall and spring tour.

SKRATCH: What's been the response to your new songs at the shows you've played lately?

VIVIAN: The show that we played at CMJ was all new songs, except for one. I would be happy playing my old favorites. It's sad. The songs that are dead and buried I want to resurrect and play again. Edmond and I

only so much room in our brains, so we can only remember 15 songs at any given time. Oh, I saw Nick Cave once, and someone was asking him to play a song, and he was like, "I don't even remember that."

SKRATCH: What's the best part of your live performance?

VIVIAN: I think it's cool that we're kind of like two bands in one. Edmond and I always switch off every two songs, so it's really hard to get bored at our show, because we have very different styles singing and playing the bass.

SKRATCH: Where do you see the band going?

VIVIAN: We would love to just be in the band full-time and not have to work another shitty job. If we could tour full-time, that would be the best thing ever. I think both of us want people to hear our music and want people at our shows.

SKRATCH: Is there anything else that you would like to add?

VIVIAN: I think it's funny when I looked up SKRATCH that it's a hip-hop magazine, too.

SKRATCH: Yeah, I've seen that. That one is spelled the right way.

VIVIAN: I got a copy of SKRATCH. It's really good.

www.mommyanddaddy.com

"My songs are kind of about some topics, and his tend to be more political and the music industry."



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AWILHELMSCREAM



A WILHELM SCREAM

By Janelle Jones

One thing's for sure: guitarist/vocalist/main songwriter Trevor Reilly and his cohorts will never become complacent with their art. His band, A Wilhelm Scream, will keep challenging themselves with each record they release. But IF the day comes when they have not the drive to do so, you can bet you'll hear from this New Bedford, MA-based band no more. Reilly has neither time nor respect for bands that release a couple good records and then arrogantly "rest on [their] laurels"—so why would he ever allow HIS band to become so lazy and smug?

"You're only as good as your most recent material, and that kinda scares me," confesses Reilly. "It scares the hell outta me, the thought of writing a shitty record—so it's not gonna happen. Our next record is gonna be fuckin' the best thing we've ever done. And that's how it's always gonna be until this band fuckin' dies."

Okay, perhaps this makes Reilly seem a little arrogant himself, but as he's just so bent on making the best records possible, doing himself one step better on each release, this turns out to be a venerable proclamation. "I wanna keep pushing us, pushing our songs, taking it to the limit. I wanna make the records crazier and faster and more gnarly—'cause that's what I would expect from my favorite bands: for them to...kill themselves trying to make the most kick-ass songs. So that's what we're gonna do."

That they did on their most recent album, *RUINER*, 14 tracks of rapid, intense, edgy punk that shows them playing anything but (as Reilly puts it) "ball-less, vapid bullshit" (you know, the wussy, safe stuff of which there's been an ungodly outpouring lately). Because of his almost draconian obsession with perfection, it's an understatement to say Reilly felt pressure when penning *RUINER*. After all, the guy loved AWS' previous LP, *MUTE PRINT*; AND he'd already

set himself up for a fall by heralding the greatness of the next album DURING interviews for *MUTE PRINT*: "Just wait till the next one. It's gonna blow [this one] away."

And now he's boasting the same way about the subsequent batch of tunes, which are essentially only "ideas" at present, as the band are too busy touring for him to record. Following a jaunt with Pennywise, October sees AWS touring with Strung Out and in January 2006 hitting Europe with Lagwagon.

www.awilhelmscream.com

Gatsbys AMERICAN DREAM



GATSBYS AMERICAN DREAM

By Aimee Curran

Seattle's boom of grunge bands in the early '90s spawned innovative, fresh blood to a stale music industry that was flopping around like a fish out of water. Today, more than decade after Seattle's adrenaline shot of music, comes Gatsbys American Dream. Being grouped with other Seattle bands like Pretty Girls Make Graves, The Blood Brothers, and Minus the Bear, the quintet's EP *RIBBONS AND SUGAR* created a buzz among major labels. But the band respectfully declined offers to sign to a major in order to maintain their creative freedom. As bassist/vocalist Kirk Huffman tells *SKRATCH*, "I could do without the bona fide rock-star status. I don't know if I want all that attention. If we are able to give someone else some sort of inspiration, then I feel like we've accomplished something more than just having Gatsby be an outlet for our creative instincts. It's much more

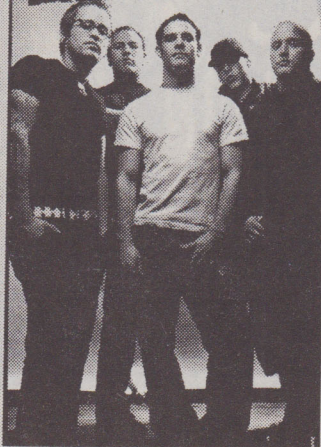
fulfilling to be able to spark someone else's interest in some way, rather than just signing pieces of paper."

The band's popularity has grown, keeping them on tour promoting their third full-length album, *VOLCANO*, where their exploration into exposing the core of human nature is reflected. *VOLCANO*, which is centered around the story of Pompeii, brings the band away from generic relationship/emo bullshit stories and instead is a breath of fresh air with its catchy guitar riffs and addicting melodies. This band is not just another wannabe.

As touring consumes their time, rehearsal is something Huffman doesn't know much about, at the moment. "We're on the road so much that we haven't even been able to find a space to rehearse in or even unload our equipment. In fact, to be honest, I don't really remember the last time we actually practiced."

For more on Gatsbys American Dream and tour dates, go to www.gatsbysamericandream.com. You can also listen to them at www.purevolume.com/gatsbysamericandream.

BURY YOUR DEAD



BURY YOUR DEAD

By Janelle Jones

Seemed we'd heard the last of Bury Your Dead years ago. The Boston-based hardcore collective started in 2001, put out their first full-length (*YOU HAD ME AT HELLO*), and then in an untimely fashion called it a day. Not to get into all the superfluous details, but BYD was resurrected in '03, and after changing a shitload of members, settled on the same guys: vocalist Mat, drummer Mark, guitarist Slim, and bassist Richæas before, plus welcomed guitarist Eric into the fold. They've been solid for two years now.

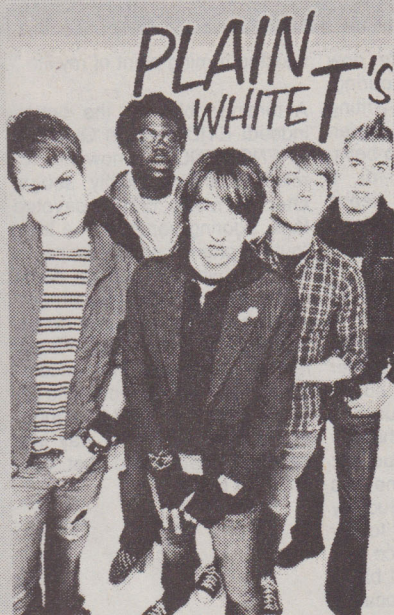
And good thing the guys decided to pursue BYD again, for they've attained much success, what with joining Victory's ranks, putting out their label debut, *COVER YOUR TRACKS*, in '04; reissuing *HELLO* on Eulogy and a live album/DVD, *ALIVE* (think about it: Bury Your Dead/*ALIVE*) this year; tackling Ozzfest this summer (people in the

know may recall that they were in the center of the Iron Maiden "egging" controversy and received numerous death threats from e-mail addresses like the hilarious gorebeast@hotmail.com. Our heroes in BYD, of course, are innocent of the absurd charges; and garnering Will Smith—who even gave Slim daps—as a fan. True dat.

Now, Slim's working on pre-production for the next album, slated for a summer release. Not divulging TOO much, he promises more heaviness and that it'll be in line with *TRACKS*, where there'll be a theme (*TRACKS*'s song titles were all named after Tom Cruise movies), but the bastard gives no hints. But you KNOW it'll end with the welcomed (or annoying, depending on which camp you're in) "Bury your fucking dead!" anthem.

So, why's everything working so well now? "It's just the amount of fun we have doing it," laughs Slim. "Four years ago when we started, we were doing it to get into shows for free. But

now we can tour the U.S. and get into shows for free. And now we're gonna be going over to Europe and Australia and Japan for free. It's amazing." Before these overseas jaunts, they'll hit the U.S. one last time (October 19-November 20 with Terror/Scars of Tomorrow), as the cycle for touring on *TRACKS* is fast coming to a close. Plus, they're happy to go out in their van and play small, sweaty clubs rather than the arena circuit Ozzfest comprises. And, not playing in the a.m. should be a pleasant change. AND, it gives everyone an opportunity to decide for him-/herself whether Rich actually plays his bass parts or (as Slim impishly divulged in *UTMOST* confidence) it's all a recording. www.buryyourdead.com



Plain White T's
By: Aimee Curran

It's been eight years since Chicago bore Plain White T's...and we're not talking Hanes here. Their early beginnings of tinkering around playing cover songs quickly blossomed into original songwriting and formulating an easy on the ears rock sound that successfully keeps up with today's ever changing music scene and got the band, now composed of Tom Higgenson vocals, Dave Tiro guitar, Mike Retondo bass/vocals, De'Mar Hamilton drums, and Tim Lopez guitar/vocals signed to Fearless Records.

The quintet who have cycled through members since originally forming in a suburban Illinois basement have done more than enough due paying playing less than desirable gigs just to get their name out. As guitarist Dave Tiro explains, "There have been probably a hundred truly strange shows. We've played shows with metal bands in western saloons, a junior high dance years

ago...oh and you can't forget the show we played recently at a townie strip club in the middle of Nebraska. It was pretty trashy, but we made it out alive."

PWT has taken to improving their sound on their own terms by not giving into trendy pressures to be the next awesome screamo or dance rock band. This music craze, which has been sweeping radio like a janitors broom to ticker tape parade confetti hasn't fazed the band in the least. "I think we make solid melodic rock music, stuff that can be enjoyed by the people who like emo, or the people who like punk, whatever. I guess I've felt we've always kind of stuck out like a sore thumb, as they say. We all just want people to relate to the music, to take it personally, to make it their own. We want to get a bigger fan base and still have each person feel like we're talking just to them. If we can do that, I don't care how big or small we are, it will still feel like a success."

With October having the band booked on tour with pop-rock heart

throbs Simple Plan the guys are looking forward to perks that come with being linked to such Tiger Beat cover boys. "We'll be playing some venues we'd never dreamed we'd play." Says Tiro.

For the band that dared to dream they have certainly evolved since their basement beginnings. As Tiro states "Well we started about eight years ago but the current line-up has only been together for like two years, and in all our minds that's the one that counts. I think we've made more impressive ground in these last two years than in the previous six—of course without those previous six we would have never laid the groundwork for the band. So it's all been important, just constantly improving ourselves as we've gone along."

For more on Plain White T's visit www.plainwhitet.com

Listen to Plain White T's and add them as a friend at www.myspace.com/plainwhitet

Mikki James
By Brandon Russell

Succeeding in the music business, New York rocker Mikki James says, is a lot like playing the lottery: the chances of making it are slim, and the best bet is to enter as many times as possible. Music veteran James has embraced his theory, plucking bass in various New York City outfits, producing local up-and-comers, and (most recently) writing and recording his own records. His latest effort, 2005's hard-hitting, GUESS WHAT?, could be the lucky ticket. The title track (with a chorus of "Guess what? Fuck you") is, as James says, the catchiest song that can't be played on the radio. What James (who has played NY gigs like Thin Lizard Dawn and Shetland Pony) has created are 10 punk-rock anthems that never give up and never get old. Throughout the a—which but that is exactly what James was looking for. "I wanted this album to have a common thread from the first song to the last," he says. "I wanted it to be a

record you could just put on and not even know it's playing. My favorite types of records are like that."

The words, like the music, have a theme: a big middle finger in the air to the music industry that has let him down in the past. James has made it to top, had a taste, and been let down for one reason or another. "These 10 songs basically just say 'fuck you' to the whole music industry. It's just an easy way for me to take out my aggression when I need to." His latest blunder included a misinterpretation of a contract: James believed he was signing a deal that included production and distribution of a record, while the latter wasn't included. Without the distribution, James had no way to move the record.

Just as the lyrics pack a punch, James's live shows are all about the impact. With shows few and far between, James refuses to let the band slip into the monotony of a weekly schedule. "I want Mikki James shows to be a big deal around

New York—so we don't play often. But when we do, it is just incredible. We have the two best guitar players in the whole [Greenwich] Village."

With a burgeoning following in New York, James and the band are ready to take it to the next level. Two years ago, they opened for Lenny Kravitz in front of 3,500. But how would the band handle the spotlight? "That's a good question," James responds. "The way I party, I am living the rock-star life right now. I don't think much would change."

Check out Mikki James at www.xemu.com.



THIS MOMENT PROFILE
By Marcia Taylor

Formed in Camarillo, CA, in 2001 by guitarist Matt Lafferty, This Moment released its first disc, FINDING A VOICE IN THE DARK, in July 2005. It was produced by Paul Miner, who has also worked with Ateya, Thrice, and Death by Stereo. Since then, the group has toured to promote the album, with a West Coast tour, a full North American tour, and a second tour that included the West Coast, as well as stops in Idaho, Utah, and Arizona. In addition to guitarist Lafferty, This Moment's line-up includes Sean Dougherty on bass, Nathan Freedman on drums, and Kyle Laughlin on vocals.

The group's press release describes This Moment's music as "fusing angst ridden bellows and a passionately brutal assault with melodic Morrissey-esque hooks." When I asked Lafferty if he agrees with this, he laughed and said, "Yes." Is the band's music really "melodic hard-

core?" He agrees with that—but only to a point, saying that the band's music also includes some dissonance. "A lot of times people don't know what to think," he explains about This Moment's sound. When I asked him about some of the band's influences, he replied, "Cave In, Refused, Boy Sets Fire, Hum, Botch, and Candiria."

FINDING A VOICE IN THE DARK has 10 tracks. Lafferty told me about one, "Bon Demain", which he wrote about a friend who was raped and couldn't remember what happened. "And I felt very helpless, so I wrote the song. It means 'good tomorrow' in French. I want her to know that it's not her fault, if she can get past that." Lafferty says that his favorite song to play from the disc is "Reaction to Rejection". "It's fast-paced. The kids like to clap to it. We get a good reaction from the crowd when we play it."

A high point of the last tour was playing a show in Eugene, OR. "The scene there is really hyped up. About

300 kids came out." The band enjoys playing as much for new crowds as it does his hometown.

This Moment has plans to begin another tour in October. They also have a tentative plan to go into the studio and begin recording again in January 2006. "We've started pre-production on some things, and we're doing it again with Paul. We're all stoked to work with him. He recorded bands that I listened to growing up." You can learn more about This Moment by visiting www.myspace/thismoment.com or www.uprisingrecords.com.



EVERY TIME I DIE

Every Time I Die
By Mabel Lam



What could cities such as San Francisco, Cleveland, Chicago, Montreal and Oklahoma possibly have in common with each other? Only the finest hardcore act, Every Time I Die, from Buffalo, New York of course. Buffalo may not be the most enriching environment for the aspiring artist, but that doesn't matter nowadays with their hectic tour schedule. On this particular day, Every Time I Die has stopped in the kooky city of San Francisco to do a show. "The crowd is as homeless as we are!" lead singer Keith Buckley laughs. Every Time I Die is currently crisscrossing the country (and even visiting our fair neighbor, Canada) to promote their latest release, *GUTTER PHENOMENON*.

Even though ETID's life now consists mostly of touring, Buckley asserts that writing music is actually much easier. "Contentment is death, so being shaken and shuffled for 9 months out of the year keeps you pretty discontent, and therefore full of things to bitch about."

The rundown of the band history is pretty simple. To stay warm in the frigid coldness of Buffalo, members of ETID had to gather together to generate a sound that would be heavy, furious, and fast. Skip to last year, on this day that I am interviewing Buckley: news has it that someone has created a fake Keith Buckley MySpace profile! Buckley fondly recalls this moment, "Since that day, I have done SEVEN backflips, been elected 'most local' in my hometown of buffalo and wrote a short narrative. It really

was the turning point of my life."

A turning point for the better, indeed! ETID's album *GUTTER PHENOMENON* is now out for release, and is highly sought after by music critics, devoted fans, adoring parents. The term "gutter phenomenon" arose in the 50's when husbands came home to a smiling housewife and an immaculate home, and rock 'n' roll was dismissed merely as a trend. This encompasses just about everything for ETID- a reminder that their innovative music fights its way into people's hearts, and that they are here to stay.

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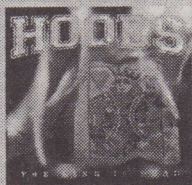


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LIVE REVIEWS

SHONEN KNIFE NU-TRA THE IDAHO FALLS THE DOLLYROTS

September 3, 2005 @ the Troubadour
(West Hollywood, CA)
By Jeff Penalty

12 years ago, I, like many of you, fell in love with Shonen Knife's album LET'S KNIFE, but in all this time I never managed to catch the band live. When I heard about this show, I found myself thinking that it would be fun but wondering if the band's novelty would hold up after all this time. Short answer: no. For the long answer, read on.

I'm a little disappointed in myself for arriving late and missing The Dollyrots. Having seen them numerous times, I feel confident in saying that I missed an infectious, Peeps-sweet pop-punk set from the recent Panic Button Records signees. In attitude and sound, they were the perfect choice to open for Shonen Knife, so I credit them with sufficiently warming up the crowd. Good job, guys!

I missed The Idaho Falls, too, but mostly because I was talking to Ian and Paige and

Colin outside. I heard them through the doors, and they really didn't sound like my bag, so I figured I'd stay outside and give them a pass rather than go inside, not like them, and then talk shit about them in this review. I'm nice that way.

Nu-Tra, however, was as much the main attraction of the night as Shonen Knife (both for me and for their sizable local following), so I was front and center for them. If you're upset that Devo doesn't play a local club gig every other week, cry no more, for there is Nu-Tra. Giving the word "devotees" an entirely new meaning, Nu-Tra (short for "New Traditionalists") presents the most grandiose synth-punk show in town, complete with keytars, cheerleaders, screen projections, and matching spiffy jumpsuits. Go see them and you'll swear that you've entered a time warp and traveled back to 1981...or forward into 2181. Despite a handful of technical hiccups—an inevitability when you have a veritable mountain of circuitry on stage—Nu-Tra easily won over the crowd with their high-energy (yet completely deadpan) new-wave cry of resistance to stupidity. They wrapped up their set with the lead singer donning a cycloptic George Bush mask and cowboy hat and the band's cheerleaders squirting soap bubbles and tossing inflat-

able globes into the crowd—all while performing an upbeat number called "The World's Got Problems". At that point, I think every member of the audience would have agreed that they'd gotten their 15 bucks worth.

Especially since Shonen Knife would soon prove that Nu-Tra had completely shown them up. Shonen Knife's songs were performed with undoubted earnestness and genuine smiles—but relatively little showmanship. The hardcore fans seemed to eat it up, but most of the crowd was unmoved. I had hoped that I would be pleasantly surprised by their performance, but my prediction was accurate: the novelty had worn off years ago. It was fun to hear four or five songs from LET'S KNIFE again, but I found myself wondering, "Do they still speak in such obviously broken English after 12 years of touring the world?" If so, that's strange; if not, then they must realize how silly they sound and are just faking it. That kinda sucked the fun out of a lot of their material.

Not the best show in the world, but at least Nu-Tra played a great set; and at least my curiosity about Shonen Knife is finally put to bed.

A Static Lullaby A Thorn For Every Heart Veda To The Kill

September 4, 2005 @ Chain Reaction
Text by: Dwight Sposato

Chain Reaction is a club that I have never been to in California. Arriving here from Chicago a little shy of a year ago I am still new to all the clubs and venues around the Southern California / LA areas. Tonight I lost my CHAIN REACTION virginity to Static Lullaby and Special guests.

Tonight was a packed show with the crowd utilizing every inch of the venue. Even the parking lot was full. After waiting for quite some time finally the show started. First to play was TO THE KILL this five-piece hit the stage pretty well with a pretty good crowd response. TO THE KILL sounds a lot like your average emo-hardcore band and yet they played a really tight set, showing no signs of sloppiness. This band did not excite me but I would not say they not are worth going to. I had a lot of trouble hearing a lot of the instruments because the sound mixer that

night was the worst mixer ever. GO back to school mixer guy.

The heat was rising in the place and the next band to grace the stage were a rock'n indie four piece named Veda who are scheduled to appear with THRICE and UNDEROATH this early October. I enjoyed every thrilling moment of Veda's performance. Their lead singer was a cute little girl with a hell of a voice and great guitar playing skills. The bass flew like a river, and yet perfectly adding that bottom layer to the music. The lead guitar player hit every note with grace showing his years of ability. They lit the club a fire with melody. What was important to me was the sole fact of the band keeping my eyes glued to the stage the entire time. I give them two thumbs up. This band will not disappoint.

After the phenomenal performance from VEDA I was anxiously awaiting the arrival of A THORN FOR EVERY HEART this five-piece from Chino Hills just recently got done this years van's warped tour and were ready again to show the people what they were made of. They came out pounding away!!! The guitars always amazing!!! The bass always precise!!! The drums keep only the finest of beats!! Last but not least the lead singer with his stage presence and amazing voice threw the crowd into a frenzy (well at

least up front). I have seen this band three times and every time that I have seen them they have never ever disappointed me once. I have always loved every minute of their shows. If you want to get your moneys worth go and check them out. Good music like theirs deserves your money. A THORN FOR EVERY HEART were nothing short of amazing and after their last song the place was hotter than my car in summer with the windows rolled up. After catching my breath and taking notes for about twenty minutes I went back in to see the headliner this evening. A STATIC LULLABY hit the stage and hard to. The crowd was screaming their name the minute they walked on. A STATIC LULLABY kept the same energy up all night not once showing signs of slowing down. The crowd was frantic and repeating every word that was sung into those silver mics. The musicians causing the fray were sweat soaked and only getting louder and harder. Their lead singer sung every word with conviction and power. The guitar players displayed award winning musicianship while never stopping the rock. I was impressed I walked out of the show with a smile on my face. A Static Lullaby was as good as they come and I wasn't surprised that so many people came to see them.

DIE HUNNS ANGEL CITY OUTCASTS PRIMA DONNA THE WORTHLESS

September 10, 2005 @ the Scene (Glendale, CA)
Words and photos by Mark A. Whitaker

After driving around the streets of Glendale looking like an idiot because I took a wrong turn and ended up getting lost I arrived at the Scene, a small bar that was hosting the start of the Old Scars and Upstarts tour. Headlining would be none other than Die Hunns, who are back after a brief break from touring while Corey had her baby.

San Diego's The Worthless took the stage with good, fast, old-school punk. In between songs, the singer for The Worthless took the time to insult the crowd sitting around the bar for not dancing to the music. Nobody bothered to respond, and Worthless played on for a few more songs.

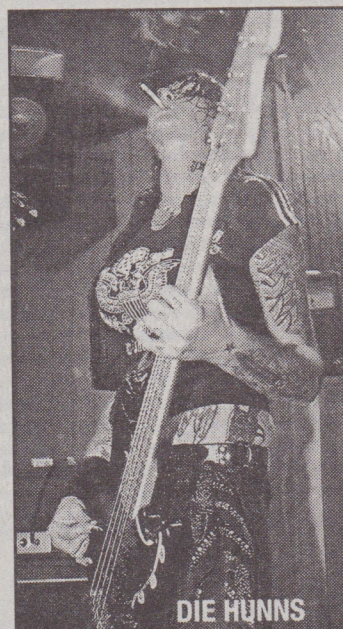
Up next was a bluesy honky-tonk band known as Prima Donna. This was an interesting change, because as Prima Donna had a keyboard and a saxophone to go along with guitars and drums. Before making a decision on whether or not this constituted "punk," I figured I'd give them a shot. I liked Prima Donna from their opening guitar riffs. The music fit right in with the atmosphere at the Scene, a cool place to hang out with friends, drink a beer, and watch a show. The keyboard was tuned to sound like a piano, which for me made a difference, as if the keyboard sounded electronic, I would have dismissed Prima Donna and not liked

the music at all. After the keyboard player switched to sax and rocked the place with a solid groove, I concluded that Prima Donna is punk, and that the band rocks.

I thought Die Hunns were performing next, since that is what the cabinets and bass drum said, but all of a sudden it's Angel City Outcasts onstage with heavy-hitting drums and two dueling guitars. Due to the lack of crowd enthusiasm, the band switched things up a bit and played "Anchors Away". This was a hit with the crowd, especially since it had sounded like a drinking song. Raise your glasses high for Angel City Outcasts.



Die Hunns took the stage to the accompaniment of Duane Peters on tambourine. I was amazed. Corey looked to be in excellent shape, considering she had recently had a baby. There were a few changes in the lineup since the last time I had seen them play: Rob was still playing guitar, but there was a new drummer and second guitarist. After the first song, Duane was all over the stage singing, dancing, and playing his tambourine. Corey kept the pace with rich bass lines and excellent vocals. She really sounds good when she sings and glad Duane convinced her to do so. Her vocals complement Duane's singing perfectly, with the two of them coming in right on each other's parts like they know what the other one is thinking (which is probably true). The crowd is loving it. People are singing along and having a great time (especially one guy, who was so drunk that he could barely stand on his own two feet and had to be repeatedly dragged upright after stumbling over). The best part for me was getting to hear Die Hunns play "Hate and Love", as well as the opener, "Time Has Come Today", which straight rocks. After a lengthy and well-received set, Die Hunns packed it up and called it a night. The fans yelled for an encore, but Die Hunns were done. After giving it 110%, it's hard to come back and play another song. After the show, Die Hunns stuck around and chatted with fans. Thanks to the Scene and to all the bands for a truly great show.



The English Beat The Skeletons The Culprits Kandace Brie & HeartsAcrossAtlantis

September 10, 2005 @ the Coach House
(San Juan Capistrano, CA)
By Joe Licavoli

I had never been to the Coach House in San Juan Capistrano, Calif. so I was not sure what to expect. When I got to the venue I was surprised that the outside of the building was fairly small and somewhat hidden,

however when I walked in the place was much larger. It was filled with tables and people eating dinner as the first act Kandace Brie & HeartsAcrossAtlantis were playing to the packed crowd. The people that worked at the venue were great, the sound and the lighting were amazing, but the fact that servers were walking through trying to get people dinner as I was trying to watch the bands became quite annoying. Well, other than that the show was remarkable.

Seventeen-year-old Kandace Brie and her band HeartsAcrossAtlantis were very impressive. The young singer/songwriter had a great voice and incredible stage

presence. Brie explained that she had been writing songs and music since she was 12 years old, which made her well crafted music even more engaging. Switching from guitar to piano Brie belted out melodic rockers such as "Someone Else". I feel that Kandace Brie & HeartsAcrossAtlantis will be making waves in the music industry soon as there was a tremendous buzz surrounding the young talent and her band.

The mood quickly changed gears from the mellow easy listening rock of Kandace Brie to the full-throttle ska-punk of Orange County's The Culprits. The band blasted on stage overflowing with energy as the band's singer asked the crowd, "Ready for

some ska?" Well, the audience must have been ready because the band got a very good response from the people in attendance (who looked to me mostly in their 30s to 40s and above.) Combining pulsating upbeat ska and assaulting punk rock The Culprits proved to be a strong new force in the ska-punk music scene.

Blasting onto stage were Southern California third-wave ska originators The Skeletones. I have not seen the band in a long time but the guys did not let me down. The group contained a full horn section, a couple guitars, bass, keyboards, and drums, so needless to say the Coach House stage was packed. The band ran through a wide range of songs, mostly coming from the band's new album, *BUMP*, which showed the band can definitely deliver strong harmony driven tunes combining rock, ska, punk and reggae. Vocalist and trumpet player Jonas Cabrera proved he was an incredible front man making sure to keep the audience's attention while delivering pulsation and melodic vocals. The Skeletones jumped from the old stuff with "Your Very Own Paradise" from 1992s self-titled album to the band's 1999 release *2K SOLUTION* with

the song "She's Alright", and a ton of songs from the new record. I was not completely familiar with the band's set because I have not heard the newer material. However, the band showed their ties to the Southern California music scene playing two incredible Sublime covers with "5446 That's My Number/Ball And Chain" from *40 OUNCES TO FREEDOM* and "Seed" from Sublime's self-titled release. The Skeletones put on an amazing set and it was great to see the band. The group have been consistently making creative and innovative music for many years. Do yourself a favor and check out the new album *BUMP* and the band the next time they play your town. For more information check out theskeletones.com

After a long break the headliner of the night hit the stage—one of the originators of the 80s' ska revival as British bands crashed into America—The English Beat. It was truly a superb experience to see The English Beat. The band played a set chock full of rocking tunes from the classic, "Mirror in the Bathroom" to the danceable "Best Friend". The English Beat have such intensity in their music it's like watching a punk rock band playing a combination of ska and

80s' rock. Front man, Dave Wakeling had an incredible presence on stage chatting with the crowd one minute and jamming out for over five minutes the next as on the song "I Confess". As the band jumped into the cover of Smokey Robinson's "Tears of a Clown" Wakeling explained that he does not get into politics but he said, "the tears of a mother in London, the tears of a mother in New York, the tears of a mother in New Orleans, the tears of a mother in Baghdad". Although not the most eloquent the statement, this made me think of everything that has happened in the past five years in the world and also in regard to the United States as a country—truly frightening. Outside of the quick political opinion, The English Beat played an extremely energetic blend of songs as a small group of people on the side of the stage danced feverishly. Alongside bands like The Specials, Madness, and The Selector, The English Beat was a strong force in bringing the sounds of 2tone and British ska to the States and thankfully they did. I would urge anyone to check out the band's live set and pick up a copy of the 2001 release, which was a best of collection, *BEAT THIS! THE BEST OF THE ENGLISH BEAT*.

Tail Dragger Societies Paradise 13 Dead End Drive Viernes 13 Left Alone

September 13, 2005 @ The Troubadour
By: Audiophile

This was my first time to The Troubadour, why? Well...I was always told it was 21+ so I never bothered to try and get in, only recently (well okay...this very night) did I find out that it was only 21+ for re-entries. Don't I have egg on my face? Not that I'm UNDER 21, it's just that most of my friends that like ska are. In fact I spent most of this night at the bar, drinking. Alcohol is my friend.

Anyway, the first band to hit the stage was Tail Dragger, and from what I heard, was an average friend-of-a-friend's band you go to see when you have nothing better to do. Actually, Societies Paradise was about the same. To each their own though, I could be totally wrong in your opinion, so give them a listen for yourself, I wasn't able to find anything for Societies Paradise but I did

find a myspace for Tail Dragger, www.myspace.com/taildragger.

Next up was 13 Dead End Drive, named after a board game I believe. I don't really remember playing it but perhaps you do...? Oh well, anyway, I enjoyed them for the most part, nothing really stuck out in my mind as I was listening to their music (from the bar with a drink), but you should check them out none the less. Where would you check them out? I'm not really sure, I searched the web AND myspace for them and all I got was a board game and some metal band from Indiana. I don't think these guys were from Indiana. Then came Viernes 13, which I also semi-enjoyed. Half of their songs were in Spanish though...and I don't really SPEAK Spanish so...I didn't know what they were saying. Not that you can usually understand what a singer is singing live, at least not at the concerts I go to, so it really doesn't make a difference now, does it? So if you enjoy rockabilly sung in Spanish...check these guys out at www.myspace.com/Viernes13. NO I am NOT a myspace freak, it's just easier to find bands on there than it is on the whole of the Internet.

Finally, it was time for Left Alone, I've loved

this band for a total of four months now, ever since I got my hands on their newest release, *LONELY STARTS & BROKEN HEARTS* on Helicat Records. I only wish I had discovered them sooner, they're one of the best new punk/ska bands I've heard, hell, I'm not even a big ska fan and I still love them. They played a great show, singing two of my favorite songs off of the album of theirs that I own, "Another Feeling" and "Dead Red Roses". They also looked very sexy that night, especially Rick the bass player and the horn/synth player Noe, he got a new due just for the show, at least...I'd like to think he did. He didn't have anime hair the last time I saw him. Not that Elvis and RamRod aren't hot shit either, really, they are. I just told Rick and Noe I'd say something about them being sexy in this review, so don't be hurt guys. The crowd really got into the show, one drunk guy who knew all the words to their songs (or at least thought he did) hopped up on stage on two or three different occasions to help them out vocally adding some much needed drunken stumbling to Left Alone's set. Everyone, and I do mean EVERYONE, that has read this review must now go check this band out at www.leftalone.net. Do it! Do it now!

CMJ 2005:
BOY KILL BOY
September 14, 2005 @ Sin-e
(New York, NY)

THE VELVETEENS
September 14, 2005 @ the Knitting
Factory (New York, NY)
By Aimee Curran

Sin-e is a tiny little venue, dark and with a bar—nothing too different from anything you might find in L.A. Since there were so

many shows going on, I stayed for Boy Kill Boy, which was an incredibly good show. BKB had that English rock charm and beat that moved throughout the room. The lead singer had this air about him, and that made every move, every vocal and guitar strum seems effortless. He could have been sitting on a park bench feeding pigeons and still put on an amazing show. But it was super humid, and the air conditioning inside the club wasn't helping the situation too much in the shoulder-to-shoulder crowd, so I left for the Knitting Factory.

When I got there, I was happy that I could

walk around without touching anyone and enjoyed a show by The Velvetes...until one audience member thought it would be funny to go up to the front and piss on the band's pedals. This just caused uproar. The lead singer was calling for the crowd to beat the guy up and was talking mad shit into the mic. No one blamed him, because not only was the pissing on the pedals disgusting, it fucked up the rest of their show—although I think they managed to pull it off decently. It wasn't the greatest or most innovative set, but under the circumstances, they worked with what they had.

THE FURY THIS BLUSH GIANT DRAG

September 15, 2005 @ Drive In
Studio 3 (New York, NY)

By Aimee Curran

Night two was amazing. I went to CBGB for the Militia Group showcase, but unfortunately the place was past capacity and I had to jet to another show over at Drive In Studio 3. It was the Inaugural CMJ Prom, and I got there right before The Fury took the stage. HOLY SHIT. This band is so fucking cool! For not being well known, they managed to grab the attention of everyone in the room. They have amazing style and seem to be dripping with talent. Frontman Jeremy Lublin worked the crowd with some hot-ass shaking and pitch-perfect

They caused an electric fury of keyboard, guitar, drums, and bass that created an almost manic excitement that wouldn't be matched by any other band that evening. It's the best when the band puts 100% into their show, but they were putting in 930976064652856236% FUCKING AMAZING!

The Fury tore their shit down in an expedient manner so This Blush could set up. This Blush was a moodier band that seemed to be the eye of the party storm going on around me. I watched for a bit before allowing the music to become simple background noise. It was hard to be totally amped on this band after such an amazing show by The Fury; however, a few friends who showed up were really into them and thanked me for getting them on the list.

Giant Drag was next, and from what I

vocals that made me thankful to be watching.

THE ATTRACTION

SEPTEMBER 16, 2005
PHOTOS BY MATT LOGAN



THE ATTRACTION

SEPTEMBER 16, 2005
PHOTOS BY MATT LOGAN

LUCERO LIMBECK CHRIS MILLS & THE NEW MISERABLE BASTARDS

September 18, 2005 @ the Middle East Club—
downstairs (Cambridge, MA)
By Carley Charpentier

The ambience of the Middle East was perfect for the lineup. These three acoustic folk-rock bands thrive in a dimly-lit, intimate setting like the Middle East. And it doesn't hurt that the bar is serving \$2 beers. So, not long after the sparse crowd begins to mosey into the downstairs venue at the Middle East do Chris Mills & the New Miserable Bastards take the stage. Without waiting for the stage lights to brighten the room, they struck a chord and flew from there, only to be joined by the stage lights a minute into their first song, "Escape from New York". The lead singer (Chris Mills, I assume) was beaming like a sixth-grader after his first kiss. While his awkwardly large smile would normally make me uneasy, it was actually refreshing to see a lead singer who looked excited to be doing what he was doing. If it weren't for the fact that he named the band after himself, one might actually suspect this goofy-grinned frontman didn't take himself so seriously. In addition to Mills's boy-next-door stage presence, Chris Mills & the New Miserable Bastards had a way of making the set seem like it was being played out of your garage. The guys all were donning jeans and T-

shirts without trying hard to look like rock stars. The cellist was in a world of his own, taking a few opportune chances to stand up and rock with his string instrument. The music was vibrant without being overbearing, giving the audience a chance to really appreciate the talent of the lead singer. While some might see the garage-band appeal in a band like Chris Mills & the New Miserable Bastards, by the last song, "Constellations", the crowd was getting bored—or maybe just progressively more drunk—because the talking of the crowd began to drown out the tunes.

Despite the still relatively meager crowd, the following for Limbeck was noticeably larger than that for Chris Mills & the New Miserable Bastards, perhaps contributing to the increase in crowd energy and movement during their first song, "Home (Is Where the Van Is)". The grungy five-man band sorted from song to song with continuous enthusiasm. They incorporated a female guest singer by the name of Rachel for "Parking Lot". Maybe it was the sudden influx of estrogen on stage or the incessant shaking of the tambourine or the increasing intoxication of crowd, but by the middle of the set the energy in the club was cruising with a comfortable classic-rock feel. The crowd was so comfortable that Ben from Lucero approached me at the bar to chat. After getting a free drink and bobbing along to Limbeck's "Sin City", he was on his way, wandering through the crowd between the merch table and the bar. Limbeck rocked through such tunes as "Watching the Moon" and "Long Way to Go", and even cracked a not-so-funny joke about playing "Immigrant Song" (which I think would have taken the cake). All in all, Limbeck's performance was consistent, and

their set list kept the show's energy for the main attraction, Lucero.

Have I mentioned that the crowd is quickly getting more intoxicated? Well let me put it this way: it's not only the "crowd" who's been visiting mister bartender, because by the time Lucero emerges into the spotlight, it's quite apparent that they aren't what one might call a "dry" band. The beginning of their set started out simply enough with songs like "Ain't So Lonely" and "Nights Like These", allowing the crowd to wall between each indie folk-rock ballad while the boys each grabbed their respective drinks, took a swig, and played on. The next few songs continued in this manner, with frontman Ben Nichols tossing out a few questionable comments out there (e.g., "Man, the band before us sucked—the third out of four"). For Nichols, there doesn't seem to be a better place than Boston to get drunk and beligerent on stage. Surely there are a few fans in the crowd who remember Lucero's second-to-last show in Boston, during which Nichols threw up on himself mid-set and had to end the show earlier than anticipated. Luckily for this crowd, Nichols's drunken antics stopped just short of vomit on the T-shirt and was confined to slurring the words that he could remember and making comments like, "Something about Boston just gets me fucking hammered." Regardless, Nichols charmed the inebriated pants off the crowd, and Lucero brought down the house with an amazing set. Even when Nichols told the crowd, "We really would do another [song], but I'm just too drunk," the band managed to squeeze one more out. The lyrics may have been wrong (I'm pretty sure I detected a few "shit"s in place of the actual words), but Lucero made for an awesome end to an incredible show.

**Q AND NOT U
SUPERSYSTEM**
September 23, 2005
@ Black Cat (Washington, DC)
By Erika Owens

Two months after I arrived in DC was the final Wilson Center Show. Talk about an introduction to DC! A whole slew of area bands played, including Crispus Attucks, Pg. 99, Strike Anywhere, and (of course) Q and Not U. The diverse array of acts, a history lesson from DANCE OF DAYS' Mark Andersen, and a large, energetic, unified crowd demonstrated what has made the DC scene so strong for the past couple decades. Now another DC institution, Q and Not U, has disbanded—but not before two rousing final shows for all ages in DC.

For the farewell shows and brief final tour, Q asked Supersystem to open. Supersystem (formerly El Guapo) grew from the same fertile DC ground as Q and Not U. Supersystem is on Touch and Go, but they were once label-mates with Q on Dischord. The Dischord connection is palpable in that signature dissonant DC sound. Though their musical roots are similar, Supersystem diverged from the DC tradition of using the stage as a pulpit, instead just sticking to the music. Their jerky, dancey sound proved that good-time DC fun will not end with Q and served as a great warm-up for the crowd. Q lead singer Christopher Richards highlighted this fact by saying, "Supersystem—those guys are the future." It was both comforting to hear that a Q-like sound would continue and energizing to see three more guys pumped up, having fun, and sharing that passion and liveliness with the crowd. Supersystem will be touring Europe this fall behind their first release with a new name and on a new label. From their jazzy performance and the endorsement by Q, it is clear that whatever their name and location, Supersystem will always have the support of the DC scene and its loyalists.

Few bands are as inextricably linked to their town as Q and Not U is to DC. Not only is their sound pure DC pep, but pride, politics, and reverence are everywhere in their music, their stage presence, and even their T-shirts. Tables for accesssudan.org and Positive Force lined the back wall; but, as always, that message was not just relegated to a few pamphlets. Positioned onstage in front of a sold-out crowd the day before a major anti-war march and Operation Cease Fire, Chris took the opportunity to not just slam the president but also to call for involvement and action. The DC flag painted on his face illustrated his DC pride, and his words of love for the city and exhortations for continued political involvement demonstrated just how close those things are to Q's heart. Chris's comments made it clear that if this were not their last show, they would have played Operation Cease Fire (like they had played the Anti Inaugural Ball earlier this year). Though political ranting often can be a distraction at a show, Q would not be Q without it. DC is the political epicenter of the U.S., but it is also the home to a surprising degree of apathy—apathy that Q was able to battle with their music, political involvement, and fun! I will miss Q and Not U most because they were the only band that made me dance. And the beauty, genius, and unique force of Q was that it wasn't mindless rump-shaking but jazzed-up, keyed-out fun with message and meaning. Most of this energy was drawn from POWER this final night. Rather than a retrospective, Q remained focused on where they are going, where we can go politically and not so much where we were before the U.S. political world imploded and Q debuted on Dischord in 2000. The hometown crowd yearning for better days was not entirely forgotten, though, as the set was peppered with songs from DIFFERENT DAMAGE and NO KILL NO BEEP BEEP. After declaring that "George Bush is a motherfucker," they tore into "Tag-Tag". Other highlights included the final pantomime of "Air Conditions" and when Ian MacKaye jumped onstage and took the mic. After over an hour, the set closed with "Fever Sleeves". But, of course, this would not be the end,

**CITIZEN COPE
COURTNEY DOWE**

September 21, 2005
@ the Paradise (Boston, MA)
By Carley Charpentier

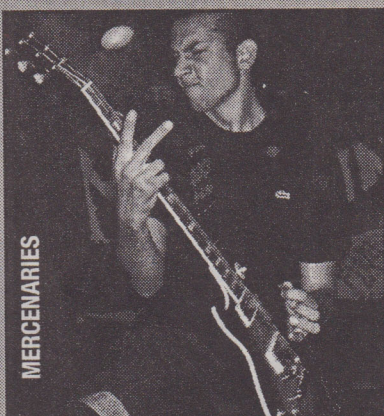
Just about an hour after the doors open, piles of fans are still filling into this sold-out show, while loud top-40 music strums through the speakers. While sifting through the crowd of mostly Boston University undergrads and the few random 50-something men who claimed to be "Citizen Cope's oldest fans," I was surprised to look up at the stage and see that Courtney Dowe had already begun playing. I had no idea what to expect from Dowe and was surprised by her live sound being so clear. Initially, I mistook it for a recording. She followed her opening song "On the Rise" with a soulful rendition of America's "A Horse with No Name". About midway through her set, the crowd suddenly woke up. Perhaps the extra hundred people who arrived during her set had something to do with it. Before you knew it, fans were dancing and heads were bobbing. This one-woman guitar dynamo stood in front of a finicky audience in a pair of khakis and a pink "got love" T-shirt, pouring energy and effort into each of her songs. While her tunes were very mellow and feminine, the liveliness of the crowd and the jazzy sound she was producing complemented each other well.

The crowd is amped, the mood is relaxed, and the show is running right on time...until the hour-long break between Dowe's set and Citizen Cope's entrance. In a few cases—when there are other attractions for the crowd, when the show is so intense that an hour is almost necessary—a break that long only seems like a 10-minute breather; but in the case of a mellow show like this one, such a break turned into nap time. If the hairy guy behind me (who was obviously there in an effort to impress his lady friend) yawned on my neck one more time, I might have asked him if he needed a pil-

low and a blanket. Just before I made a beeline for the exit, Citizen Cope emerged onto a blue-lit stage, his hair pulled into a bun and donning simple blue pants and a grey shirt. Given the recent tragedy of Hurricane Katrina and her sister Rita, Cope symbolically began the set with his song "Hurricane Waters", during which the crowd carried the tune. The song was appropriate and quickly had me forgetting that I just spent an hour of my time with a mouth-breather behind me. It was during this song that I was able to actually sit and appreciate the true musicianship that Cope has to offer. It's really amazing when you see a show and the vocalist is just as great live as the polished final version. Song after song, the crowd swayed or thumped with the music, especially once Cope reached "Bullet and a Target". After playing a few of his better-known songs, the crowd's attitude and liveliness began to change. During songs like "If There's Love", the clanking bottles and chatty groups of friends slowly began to drown out the tune. At one point, Cope was singing a song with very little instrumental accompaniment, and the words were next to inaudible over the drunken audience. Only during songs with a bit more energy and movement did they seem to acknowledge that they were at a concert and not at a club. But there wasn't a face in the crowd looking away from the stage when Cope broke into "Son's Gonna Rise". The intensive instrumentals blared through the speakers, shocking each person into automatic awe and moving the crowd together in a mysterious way. As if to lull the crowd back to the near-comatose state they'd been in before his set, Cope finished with a few mellow tracks, thanked the crowd, and sent the sleeping babies on their way.

as the band returned for two encores and finally concluded with "Soft Pyramids", a kiss blown to the crowd, and a bow.

Dancing, politics, and history in the making pervaded this final show. Like the final Wilson Center show, this one was played to a large, diverse crowd of kids in high school, kids who have listened to Q since high school, and even a few people who could have kids in high school. In DC, all types and sounds are welcome. This inviting, vigorous amalgamation is what made Q and Not U grand. Now they are off to solo projects and side gigs—but not before leaving with pizzazz and POWER.



**HELKEN
MERCENARIES
MY RUIN
BLEED THE SKY**

September 24, 2005 @ The Whisky A Go-Go
(Hollywood, CA)
Text and Photos by Audiophile

Hollywood is a wonderful city, really it is, it's just that...getting to it and finding parking once inside of it is a BITCH! Once we finally got to The Whisky A Go-Go we were late, so I only got to see most of one song by Helken. At least...I think it was most of one song. I walked in bridge in the music that seemed to have lasted about five minutes before the singer came back in and started growling or singing or something...yeah...I'm a BIG metal fan if you can't tell. No sarcasm in that statement. None what-so-ever. The hardest thing ever was NOT to laugh during the hair twirling, not head banging, HAIR TWIRLING. Oh man, that was just so...great. Be sure to check Helken out on the web at WWW.Myspace.com/Helken since their web site is under construction.

And then there were the Mercenaries, and

they weren't half bad. One of their songs, "Agony and Ecstasy" drove me nuts though. I didn't like it at all, the singer just kept singing "Agony and ecstasy" over and over then I couldn't understand what the fuck he was saying. Other than that one song, it was a good set. The crowd started steadily growing also, and they all seemed to be digging it. For some reason I was under the impression that this band was Bleed the Sky, although I later confirmed that they were in-fact not, after I left the show. Before I move onto the next band and leave the bands website URL up here, I'm going to comment on one more thing. Bass player of the Mercenaries, you're hot, and you know it. I just wanted to confirm your belief. Be sure to check the Mercenaries out at WWW.Mercenariesband.com.

By the time My Ruin was on stage, The Whisky A Go-Go was packed! All the teenaged metal heads were up in front and the elder ones were packed around the bar and back of the club and all were entranced. I have to admit I didn't expect much from My Ruin after checking out their Myspace (WWW.Myspace.com/Myruin) earlier that day but they honestly surprised me. Their music on that website does them no justice. Tairre B,

MY RUIN



the lead singer, worked the crowd amazingly and had a voice that could scare the blood out of a potato (even though potatoes don't have blood...you get the point though, I hope). I don't know how else to describe their set other than grand, the guitar parts were amazing, the drumming was insane, and the bass player slapped the hell out of his bass. Don't listen to this bands Myspace, instead go to their website WWW.Myruin.com and be sure to see them when they are around you, it's worth it.

I'm pretty sure Bleed the Sky came up next, sadly I left...thinking that they had already played. I'm sorry Bleed the Sky, if it makes you feel any better I saw a lot of kids wearing your shirts. And here, I'll still link people to your website and your Myspace so they can check you out, okay? Give Bleed the Sky a listen and hear what I missed at WWW.Myspace.com/Bleedthesky and WWW.Bleedthesky.com.

**FURTHER SEEMS
FOREVER
TAKOTA
DEAD LETTER DIARIES
THE COLOR TURNING**

September 24, 2005 @ Chain
Reaction (Anaheim, CA)
By Jeff Lambert

Another night at Chain Reaction: the sinful, all-ages hipster hangout where 16-year-old kids are free to get wild, smoke cigarettes, and watch their favorite indie rock bands perform. On this particular night, the kids are out in full force to cheer on a few hometown favorites before catching an acoustic set from Further Seems Forever.

The evening opens on a mellow note with an impressive performance from The Color Turning. These five Orange County natives stand out as the most creative band on the bill, with a mature sound reminiscent of '90s indie rockers June

of '44. Using an infectious guitar riff and catchy melody to grab your attention, TCT wastes little time impressing the audience with their opener, "This Is How That Feels". Subtle harmonies and smoothly layered guitars co-exist neatly with lead singer Steve Scavo's vocals, as each song builds on the next. While the mellow rock drags a little at times, the music holds up well in a live setting, and the group cruises through their eight-song set. With a new record due out this month, the ANTIDOTE EP is worth a listen at www.thecolorturning.com.

Dead Letter Diaries brings a quick change of pace with their intense rock 'n' roll performance. The youthful quartet plays with a vigor and confidence that instantly connects with the crowd. Drawing on the band's energy, the audience bounces higher and shouts louder with each passing song. Not having the most original sound, DLD relies on their great chemistry to put on a crowd-pleasing per-

formance. The combination of poise, confidence, and boundless energy creates a great rock atmosphere for the kids at Chain Reaction. You can pick up their latest record, *SINCE THE REALIST EP*, at Tower Records.

Playing only their second live show together, the wildly ambitious rock ensemble Takota attempts to recreate the arena-rock fervor made popular in decades past. Unfortunately, they fall short of their own lofty expectations. There is no denying Takota's collective musical talent and songwriting ability, but there is much room for improvement before they take over the rock world. Never boring, the catchy drumbeats keep your head bobbing as each song expands with every changing harmony. You can't help but think of bands like Journey when listening to "Little Honesty" and "Car Park Conversation", but lead singer Grant Arnow has trouble hitting the high notes in a live setting, and his flamboyant

stage presence is almost distracting. All in all, the crowd seems to enjoy the lively show put on by Takota.

With the recurring game of musical chairs seemingly coming to an end last year, singer John Bunch is the latest frontman for Further Seems Forever. Tonight, the former Sense Field vocalist joins his new mates on stage for an acoustic performance that headlines the show. Last year's success of *HIDE NOTHING* (Tooth & Nail) proves that the band can seamlessly switch lead singers like a mechanic would switch a tire. Sadly, the acoustic set limited the effectiveness of what FSF can bring to the table and ends up boring, at best. Perhaps a complete electric performance would bring the show to life, but the dark emo performance seems dull after only a few songs. Even their best acoustic effort can't recreate the complex and intricate sounds that made *HIDE NOTHING* an achievement to be proud of.

**GODS & HEROS OPENING:
PERISH
THE CLAMOUR
CATALYST
ODD PROJECT**

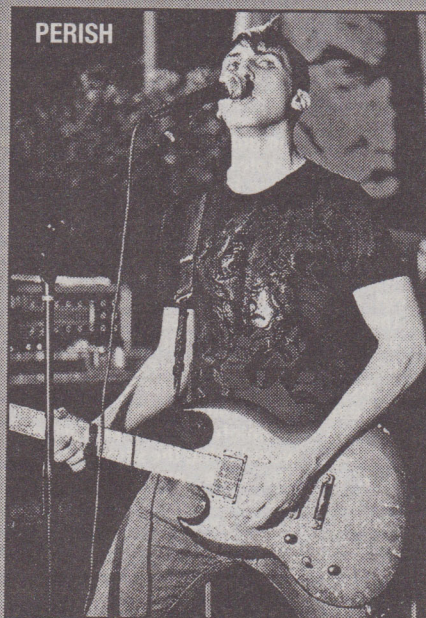
September 24, 2005 @ Gods & Heros
(Costa Mesa, CA)

Text by Brendan Peveril
Photos by Travis

When I heard about the party being thrown for the grand opening of Gods & Heros [sic], I had no idea what to expect. The evening was to include a fashion show, photography, catered food and drink, and live music. If anything, though, the mixed message being sent by the party seems to be a good indication of what we can expect from Gods & Heros, a combination hair salon/art gallery/photography studio where they also do fashion and makeup design. They're setting up a recording studio, too, but it wasn't ready for the public at the opening. The 5,500-square-foot facility houses everything spaciouly, and the parking lot in the back afforded a comfortable venue for the fashion show and live music. The building is right next to the Lab and Camp; and Alec and Michelle, owners of Gods & Heros, are hoping to be a part of that same creative community.

The festivities got started with the fashion show. The outfits were designed by Michelle from clothes supplied by the stores of the Lab and the Los Angeles designers Black Heart Brigade and The Cinch. We were presented with futuristic avant-garde looks at an eclectic mix of styles, from torn denim and biker boots to acrylic sweaters and mini-skirts. Likewise, the models' hair and makeup had that "seems unlikely today until I see people walking around like that tomorrow" feel. The models (furnished by Next Models, by the way) all seemed well-dressed, -made up, and -hair-styled to me. (That's a dubious vote of confidence, at best—but even people who know more about fashion than I do were impressed.)

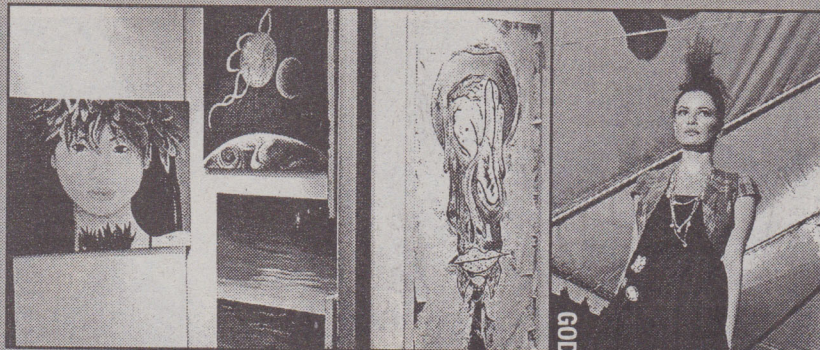
The first band to take the stage, Perish, was an enthusiastic punk act with heavy post-death-metal influences. They were energetic, and



the crowd—at least the part near the stage—was loving what they brought. Their set was too short, though. While Perish's angry vocals and hard, crunchy guitar lines were a good start (and an interesting foil for what was to come), I would have liked to hear them play all night.

The Clamour sounded like The Rolling Stones might have if The Clash had happened 20 years earlier. Their amped-up '60s Brit-pop vibe was complemented—almost a little too much—by their "Stones on Sullivan" look. They were really good, though. The Clamour is a fantastic band technically in a way that often leaves an audience in the cold, but the crowd fucking loved them. They even managed to lure a few people from the small talk and schmoozing half of the party. With Chris Bradley of The Distraction on guitar and members of The Phantom Surfers, The Fuzztones, and The Checkers, these kids are destined for local-legend status, if not more.

Catalyst was another story altogether. He promised us some "underground hip-hop like we'd never seen," and I guess that's what we



got. By the time he got to the stage, though, the party had started to dissolve, and the stragglers weren't interested. Even when Saint Nicholas joined him, there

was no way he could rock that set. The beats were good and the rhymes were smooth, but even the best performer's going to come up short in front of a crowd that cold. I'd really want to see Catalyst in front of a real audience before I pass any strong judgment one way or the other. I'm lukewarm about his set—but I'm not sure it's his fault.

Odd Project pulled it out, though. Faced with an imaginary audience (almost everybody had gone home—although this one drunk dude was very enthusiastic about them), they still managed a decent set, and they closed the show with a bang. They played great. Everything was tight and together, sounding kind of like My Chemical Romance with an experimental, less-mainstream, vibe. Their songs weren't all great, but I'm expecting big things from them in the future.

All told, the party was successful; and any future events at Gods & Heros should be worth checking out. As far as their other offerings go, without seeing the work they turn out, there isn't much to say about photography and recording studios when they open. They looked the business, though. The art gallery was worth a glance. It showcased local painters and had one fixture that Alec was particularly proud of: an interactive wall displaying artwork associated with local musicians that played their music on demand. Gods & Heros reminds me of other attempts at facilities that try to please everyone...and too often end up creating screwed-up little shops that want to be all things to all people, sending mixed messages to the public without ever really being sure about what they are. While that usually makes for an awesome vibe while it lasts, it's almost always very short-lived. Rather than a mixed message, though, they're sending a fuzzy message here. Instead of trying to make Gods & Heros into something that is all things to all people, Alec and Michelle are building a platform from which they can do whatever they want. It's every creative mind's dream, and it's punk rock as fuck.



GODS & HEROS OPENING

GODS & HEROS OPENING

**AS CITIES BURN
GYM CLASS HEROES
GATSBYS AMERICAN DREAM
EMERY**

September 25th 2005 @ Troubadour
(Hollywood, Ca)
By Ian Wilkins

I wonder about Sunday night shows? Weren't Sunday nights invented to sit at home and relax? Taking a break after a long weekend of binge drinking and sleep deprivation? Those thoughts don't seem to be the case tonight. In fact as I lay my throbbing head on the glass of the Troubadours VIP loft all I see is a packed show. Damn all you non-alcoholics...damn you to hell.

Due to the fact that yes, I am a raging drunk, I couldn't seem to make it to the show in time to see the first band. So I am sad to say I cannot make a fair judgment whether As Cities Burn was a good or bad band. In the future I promise I will only review shows wasted and never hung over.

I can however say that Gym Class Heroes made my head hurt more than the ride down Laurel Canyon (it's a really curvy road leading into Hollywood). Was it music or just another poetic fool who decided his soap box needed a beat? I'm voting for the box one on this. The drums were the same from rambling to rambling

and Mr. Guitarist had big eyes but little skill playing the stringed instrument. They did have a bassist...I think. He just kind of plucked away in the corner looking kind of sad. Maybe it was because he was stuck in the shitty ass group. So, sorry to all the fans of Gym Class Heroes your messiah is just another mess in my opinion. I might have taken more of what he said seriously if he didn't grab his cock every two seconds.

The rest of my review will be written to the tempo of the Vandals "Pat Brown". (Bum-Ta-Bum-Ta) Gatsbys American Dream is (Bum-Ta-Bum-Ta) just another half way there band. They make me want to scream "What has happened to originality". I'll be happy to tell you. It's the fucking Troubadour on a Sunday night. Anybody that might be original is more than likely in the emergency room after a major drug overdose. That doesn't mean Gatsbys American Dream was a horrible band I'm just saying they could definitely use some room for improvement. The lead singer with his "fraternity" looking white polo shirt did dance around the stage awfully well and they did play a song called "Fable" that I took notice to. A little bit heavier than your normal Los Angeles rock band but definitely no Minor Threat. I'm sure you can find out all about them on their Website or at their Myspace page.

It seems that my favorite band of the night was Emery and from the looks of the a mil-

lion screaming kids it was theirs too. 23 minutes after the band before them left the stage the lights dim. Then POW Emery takes the stage like a convict takes another in the shower. Emery is six guys who unlike the other bands before them look like they might have actually done this before. Adorned in western clothing that was way to small for them Emery had the "style". More importantly they could play those damn instruments and play them they did. Each member of Emery could have quite possibly been born with their instruments. I can't remember the last show where you have that many members and if you lost just one then the whole band would turn to shit. The Mad Caddies come to mind but then again when don't they. It's hard to describe the type of music Emery played but if I had to put them in a category then I might say old Red Hot Chili Peppers with a bit of Tijuana donkey fucking. Emery's set lasted more than 45 minutes and each song had more punch than the previous one. It was almost good enough to make me forget my poop feeling...almost. Put Emery on a better bill and you might have the makings of a great show.

I might be a little disgruntled about the evening due to the fact that I was incredibly hung-over and it was a fucking Sunday. But, to be totally honest I am so completely wasted as I write this that I don't really care what you people think. Thanks and have a great day.

**Perish
Doc Holiday
The Sancitified
Years To Come
As The Blade Falls
13 Killings
Hogue Barmichael's
25 September 2005
by Brittany Zane**

Why are all these morbidly obsessed, heartbroken, yet violently angry bands

multiplying like catholic rabbits in Orange County? All cynicism aside, this musical movement is pulling quite a lot of serious attention, these kids are quickly finding their niche in OC's already crowded scene. Breakthru Entertainment's Eric Bill has been aiding this phenomenon by putting together local metal core shows that has no problem filling a venue on a Sunday night.

Perish's show at Hogue Barmichael's seemed to be a sort of miniature tour of Orange County's emerging hard rock talent, via bands covering every area. 13 Killings gave us our first taste with mixed representation from the neighboring cities of Santa Ana and Tustin. Their sound Indi-

cated obvious talent and energy, but lacked song writing experience. Simplistic, predictably timed breakdowns, combined with done before high pitched screamer paired with a low growling back up vocalist. Although the crowd didn't seem to mind and kept moving through every song. Adding a little more variation, like more of the amazing organ notes and maybe adding in a sing-a-long or monologue, would improve their music greatly. Check out their Myspace for MP3s and upcoming shows:
<http://www.Myspace.com/13Killings>.

I'd love to also be able to say that about the next band, As the Blade Falls, but I really

can't bring myself to. At least their name prepared me for their lack of originality. This Huntington Beach based quintet put more attention to looking the part rock stars, than actually being able to play music. Looking like you have rock and roll coursing through your veins doesn't make up for lack of talent. Not even the consciously groomed, yet adequately disheveled lead singer's regulation front man haircut can mask his lack of singing ability. The instruments just kind of went off on their own path. I couldn't even really identify a stable beat at any time. The danceable parts were pointless, as the rhythm changed entirely too quickly to make any full movements. They don't seem to understand that playing music that is simply loud and snippets of cliché hard rock noises appeals mainly to 13 year old boys in desperate need of attention. I'm a fan of hard music; I think that sometimes the tone of a scream can say more than the words. There was no soul in what I heard. Despite all their effort exerted, had no intensity. To have a good hard rock song, it needs to be made from your passions and convey emotion your listener can relate to. They appeared to have some fans, so maybe I'm wrong. There's no way in hell these guys would be without a Myspace. (<http://www.myspace.com/AsTheBladeFalls>)

To add insult to injury, the next band is probably the most promising hardcore band I've seen in a while. Maybe it's the fact that they're from one of Orange County's less superficial cities, Westminster, that gives them the ability to capture your attention with their powerful sound, yet not really sound like anybody else in particular. More of an old school sound can be found in their music, with passionate, intelligible lyrics, and strong drums. I recommend checking out this band's Myspace (<http://www.myspace.com/YearsToCome>). If you're into music that gets a positive mood pumping and is driven by conviction,

or if you just like stuff that simply "sounds good".

After the first three bands had been so vastly diverse, I was wondering what "The Sanctified" would bring. Of course, with a typically metal sounding name, they played ultra heavy metal music that basically sounds identical to every other hard metal band. I noted it as being good for being drunk and up to no good. With deep growling, shamelessly heavy guitars, and drumming with such senseless force that how a rhythm can be sustained is almost impressive. This band succeeds where As The Blade Falls failed. They are senseless noise, but at least it's obvious that there is emotion fueling the energy. It wasn't until I read their lyrics on their Myspace (<http://www.Myspace.com/TheSanctified>) that I realized they were a Christian band.

Apparently the next band was Doc Holiday, I unfortunately didn't catch their set... however I was fortunate enough to catch headliner Perish. After all of this nubile flesh, the crowd was obvious more than ready for their main course. Don't take the self proclaimed "boy band of hard rock" lightly. Though diverse in talent and influence, each of Perish's five members is a south county hardcore veteran and has ate, breathed, and lived rock music for years, almost a decade in a couple cases. They are seasoned rockers with the multitasking ability to charm the panties off females and still inspire a sea of thrashing on the dance floor.

A unique feature of the group, and one of its biggest draws, is the fact that their heavy riffs, pissed off screams and rock showmanship are contrasted by actually singing raw emotional lyrics and melodic notes rarely seen in this male dominated scene. Davey Lin is working double duty to keep the melody stable, backing up Schwede's lead vocals and playing lead guitar. Joining Lin

on rhythm guitar is Tyrone. Bassist Justin Jolley, with musical influences ranging from unlikely groups like Murder City Devils to hardcore legends Converge, is the heart of their harder edge. That would make David Harvey, a.k.a. "Harvey", its soul. Without over powering the intense emotion in the lyrics and melody, the baseline adds rock and roll. Despite the downer subject matter of the music, these two keep the crowd rocking to the infectious beat.

This night, the boys took stage as their haunting intro reeled in the crowd and then exploded into the romantically titled "Vair Vair", followed by "Our Sin". Mid-way through the set, Perish threw in their wildly popular "Sounds of Trains". Probably the best example of their ability to fuse emotionally charge lyrics fans can relate to with a rock beat they can move to, to keep the subject matter from getting too heavy. If that isn't enough, the song's catchy chorus is easy to sing to and keeps the crowd involved. The next song was new and untitled as of yet, seemed to mellow everyone out, with little else to do but listen, much of the crowd hung on every unfamiliar note. The short set was ended with the appropriately titled, "Till We Say Good Bye". Although not quite as popular with the crowd as Sounds of Trains, most of the crowd still seemed to give their all for the last song of the evening.

Perish's music isn't quite comparable to other bands, as their sound is a unique blending of styles. No matter your taste, these guys put on an intense show and give 110% of their energy for the crowd. For now, check their Myspace (my computer has been giving me problems using the Internet and I couldn't get to it... can you please get the URL?) for band pics, mp3s, and tour dates. In the near future, PerishRock.com will service all your Perish needs.

U.S. FAT WRECK TOUR: THE EPOXIES

September 27, 2005@ the Metro (Chicago, IL)
By J. Wallace

A shit sound system, plus 20 rows of motionless, befuddled zombies glaring away behind four rows of energetic Epoxies fans, plus a band that grew increasingly irritated at the lackluster response by Chicago cretins. All this SHOULD add up to a lousy show; fortunately for those who love Portland's The Epoxies, the experience was anything but.

Singer Roxy Epoxy is probably destined for a solo album in the next two to three years. In spite of malfunctioning monitors and badly-mixed vocals, her performance had what many of her peers lack: a large amount of frenzy coupled with the iron control and discipline of David Bowie or Peter Murphy. The group plays at being sloppy on stage, but if you ignore the cheesy-on-purpose antics of keyboardist FM Static and company, you'll hear tightly-wound songs that start and stop on a dime and drumming that rivals old Chicago favorites Naked Raygun for precision and speed.

The night was full of Instant Epoxies classics, such as "Bathroom Stall", "Need More Time", and "Synthesized". Guitarist Viz Spectrum and bassist Shock Diode hammed it up in striped pants and great, cornball hair-metal poses. The best part of the show was something nobody really noticed: the absolute professionalism of a band that presents itself as a "Fuck you—we're new wave/punk" outfit. Some

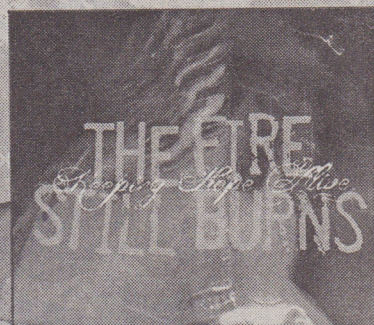
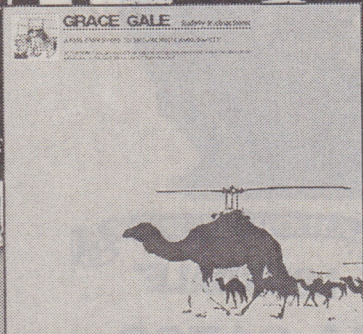
mixed-gender bands end up degenerating into some kind of sex showoff onstage. Somebody is always getting dry-humped from behind, or the Madonna-style burlesque poses come trotting out midway through the show. The Epoxies never went there. Instead of relying on sex clichés, the band concentrates on new-wave style, complete with wrap-around shades, guitar-mounted lasers, and MAD MAX clothes. It's a real blast of fresh air to see a group that uses its collective imagination instead of the tired old sex fun and games to get pulses pounding. Roxy Epoxy needed no help keeping all eyes glued on her. Her onstage contortions looked almost tribal at times. She was all rolling eyes and flying elbows up and down the footlights. But a real problem with the set was something the band had little control of: sound levels. The Metro has audio difficulties in the pas (including some nasty feedback during Peter Murphy's summer concert). The Epoxies had the same trouble in nearly the same spots on stage, only for this show there was no feedback, just a big, empty hole where the vocals ought to have been. The band was irritated by both the technical problems and the lack of response from much of the crowd; but they delivered the goods, anyway. Those who knew the songs ignored the on-again, off-again microphone, and Roxy Epoxy turned up the volume on her physical presence. Overall, an excellent presentation with high-energy songs that reproduce well in concert.

Chicago was just one stop in The Epoxies' ambitious tour. They are scheduled for a slew of dates with The Soviettes, Smoke or Fire, and headliners Against Me! that take them all the way to Fargo, ND, and back down to San Antonio before heading to Canada. If you live along the Fat Wreck tour route, do NOT pass on seeing this show.

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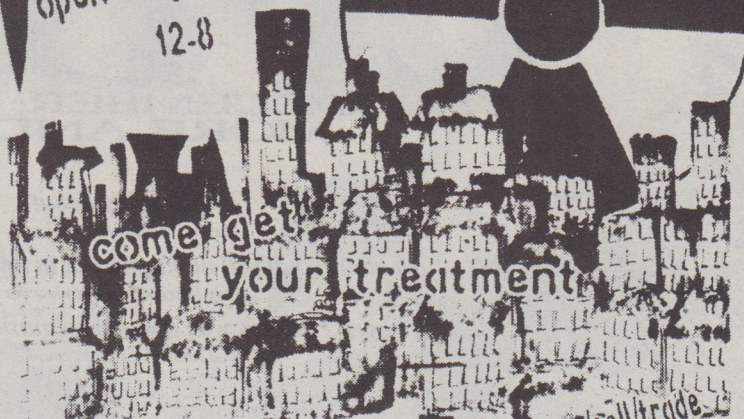
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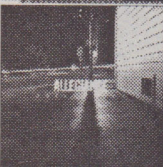
Every few years, music that ruined our eardrums in the early '80s seems to make a comeback. The debut EP from this crazed Southern California quartet is guaranteed to damage them again. This time, it's worth it. The Verry brothers, two blazing guitarists from Argentina, provide the spark behind this modern version of Spinal Tap. Lead singer Adam Joad, when not screaming like AC/DC, is also the host of L.A.'s weekly CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE PROJECT, a political radio show. The powerful speed drumming is provided by Peter Pace, a Berkley College of Music graduate. The Verry brothers also split time with a very serious flamenco band. So why would musicians with such talent play songs that sound like Van Halen on speed? According to the band, it's just to save the world from crappy pop and emo. While verging on the hysterical, this CD does kick some long-haired ass. -Dug



AFTERMATH OF A TRAINWRECK
HORSESHOES AND HANDGRENADES
NEW AGE

Straight-edge hardcore troupe Aftermath of a Trainwreck let 10 tracks of unadulterated aggression loose in about 35 minutes on HORSESHOES AND HANDGRENADES. While the Salt Lake City quintet is far from breaking new ground with their sound or subject matter, they do manage to commandeer the "gargled glass lead" vocal meets churning rhythms and massive guitar breakdown

structure well enough on the songs "Junkie Stomper" and "Talk Shit Get Hit" to elicit some soberingly heavy moshpit beatdowns, keeping hardcore and metal enthusiasts alike bruised and bloodied. www.newagerecords.com -Mike SOS



ALLEGIANCE
OVERLOOKED
RIVALRY

As they proved quite adeptly on their debut full-length, OVERLOOKED, San Francisco six-piece Allegiance belt out wonderfully well-thought-out, heavy, aggressive, fast, and feisty hardcore in the vein of bands like Shutdown, Still Crossed, and Comeback Kid. With ample breakdowns, relentless intensity, powerful vocals (neither cleanly sung nor growled, but more of a

welcomed perpetual shout), and some nice gang vocals thrown in, OVERLOOKED is a great pure hardcore album, displaying no signs of the metal that so many "hardcore" bands are incorporating into their sound these days. Standout tracks include the trifecta of "On the Line", the excellent "Just Let Go", and "Don't Tell Me". You'll want this album on repeat, as it gets better with each listen... -Janelle Jones



BABY WOODROSE
DROPOUT!
BAD AFRO RECORDS

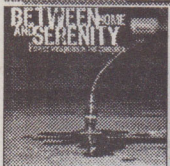
The fourth full-length CD from this ass-kicking Scandinavian trio is a throwback album of retooled garage classics from the '60s. If you've never heard Baby Woodrose perform, you've missed a classic, mind-bending electric attack reminiscent of Blackmore's Rainbow or even Led Zeppelin in their heyday. On DROPOUT!, the band goes to its roots and records covers of several fairly obscure

'60s bands, such as The Stooges, Captain Beefheart and His Magic Band, and The Savages. These covers do more than justice to the original versions, as the band takes these tunes into the new millennium and rocks them so hard you'd think they were originals. We may not be able to wholly recreate the heady enthusiasm of the psychedelic '60s, but if you ever wanted to feel the sweaty excitement and hope of a movement that tried to change the world, this band does a good job of capturing that feeling. -Dug



BALZAC
OUT OF THE GRAVE AND INTO THE DARK
MISFITS RECORDS

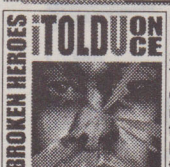
After the requisite Samhain-like eerie introductory track, horror punks Balzac get down to business in glorious fashion with the following two bombastic tracks, "zetsubou-no-ano-basho-e" and "season of the dead", two fast, dark, aggressive hardcore punk numbers. Yet, despite a couple of songs akin to these, there are quite a few "sunnier" (hal), more melodious, pop-oriented punk songs ("inside my eyes", "art of dying"...), and, like The Misfits, Balzac play playing both styles. They also include some fun electro-blast interludes with distorted spoken vocals (the "beyond evil 308" trilogy) interspersed throughout the 22-song compilation (which happens to be executive produced by Jerry Only). At 78 minutes in length, OUT OF THE GRAVE is pretty much for true fans of this Japanese band—or anyone into the fiendish side of punk rock. There's also a DVD packed with goodies. -Janelle Jones



BETWEEN HOME AND SERENITY
POWER WEAPONS IN THE COMPLEX
RUST RECORDS

This Ohio band formed from two dueling high-school bands and make a sound commonly referred to as "screamo." I don't really see all that much of that in the music—although there is some; it feels a little more poppy to me, but not in an annoying way. BHAS certainly are good musicians, and it would be hard to say that any two songs sound the same. This album is tight, for the most part, in that there are no pieces t that seem there "just because" or

because the band was trying to live up to a stereotype of some kind. This is a nice mix of punk, pop, screamo, and regular old rock readily available—a sign of good management. -Thomas Murray



BROKEN HEROES
I TOLD U ONCE
STREET ANTIENOR RECORDS

Though Britain's bitter laborers laid Oil's furious foundation decades ago, a dedicated American movement still holds the same ideals: working-class convictions, punk-rock values, similar fashions (smooth scalps, suspenders, steel-toed stompers), etc. Broken Heroes' brand of strident street-punk expresses this sense, these themes, that scene on several levels. Lyrically, songs such as "I Won't Pay Your Way" tell a tale of corporate cupidity and a

cutback's baleful consequences; while "Everybody Get Stoopid" gently describes a punk-rock utopia: a battered bar, a bevy of beers, a band singing on stage, and some slam-dancing skins. Musically, songs like "Sick" stagger at wild, wobbly speeds; while caustic roars rise fiercely from bawling bellies above a vicious six-string's clamorous chords. Those '70s skins, their perspectives and purposes, are, perhaps, history, but Broken Heroes has instilled in themselves that essence. -Dane!



BURY YOUR DEAD
ALIVE
VICTORY RECORDS

These guys quickly became a big deal—and deservedly. This album features live recordings from a mid-2005 show at Chain Reaction. The sound quality is very decent, giving the creative listener a chance to pretend he is one of the screaming faces in the audience that evening. "38 RPM" is the song I could not stop listening to. Over and over again I played this track. It's insane how good it is. That being said, I found it a little off-putting and disturbing that the lead singer used his metal voice even when talking to the crowd in between songs...but I guess there is something admirable in that he never feels the need to turn it off. Many of the song titles are after movies, (like MAGNOLIA, EYES WIDE SHUT, TOP GUN, THE OUTSIDERS...). I don't know if this has anything to do with the songs—but who cares? The music is good. I strongly suggest listening to this band. -Thomas Murray



CALDWELL
ACCIDENTAL RENOVATION
INDIANOLA RECORDS

This band's first full-length sounds more like a fourth or fifth CD. The production is as polished as can be. Instruments and vocals are clear and defined, matching one another incredibly well. Gary Marschka and Jordan Leake are in a league of their own when it comes to the guitar parts. Much like most metal bands, their talents exceeds that of those of the other bandmembers. Caldwell claim to

innovatively mix punk, emo, hardcore, and metal—and they're right. Emotional lyrics with punk and metal instrumentals and hardcore vocals create a package that is phenomenal down to the very last heart-breaking scream. -Tijana Martinovic



CHRISTINE FELLOWS
PAPER ANNIVERSARY
SIX SHOOTER RECORDS

This is simply gorgeous. PAPER ANNIVERSARY is Canadian Christine Fellows's third record with, I'm sad to say that I haven't heard those earlier works. Transcending any simple descriptive term, Fellows pens exquisite, folk-influenced work with a life of its own. It's original, and the instruments used include accordion, piano, and glockenspiel. At one point I think there was an entire

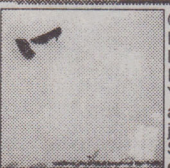
song with either a cat purring or a person snoring in the background. It's a sparse album that never overwhelms but touching and endearing. Certainly this is one that should be heard. It would be a crime to ignore the singer/songwriter talents of Christine Fellows. -David Barker



COL. KNOWLEDGE & THE LICKITY-SPLITS
FALL IN LOVE ALL OVER AGAIN WITH...
ALIVE RECORDS

Col. Knowledge & The Lickity-Splits is a long-named band with a firm handle on pop music history. I can't remember the last time I heard so much keyboard work on one album. Some of these tracks sound like throwbacks to the '60s, whereas others reach all the way back to the '50s. "Comin' on Fast" comes off like a early but less angry Elvis Costello, whereas "Delightfully" is graced by a Prince-y

falsetto lead vocal. This work mostly sounds like fun and games, but then it gets a little serious toward the end. "No Man's Land" is straightforward electric guitar rock, and "Storm Clouds" is built upon strummed acoustic guitar. Neither track contains the band's usual party organ or plain lyrics about love and romance. Nevertheless, you'll likely fall in love with Col. Knowledge & The Lickity-Splits' wonderfully retro-rock sound—whether the group's being temporarily serious or not. -Dan Macintosh



CORDOVA
LIE UNTIL IT BECOMES THE TRUTH
LIMEKILN RECORDS

I can't stand EPs. I think that they're the new form of human torture. You find an awesome band like Cordova, play their incredible CD, and 20 minutes later you're sitting there in silence wondering what just hit you. Here's what: you were just blown away by James Alex Snyder's whisper of a scream crooning. This boy has some serious emotion behind some not so serious lyrics. I don't know about the

rest of you guys, but whenever I listen to this CD, I get a very happy feeling in my poor, shattered emo heart. So stop being emo and start dancing—along to this CD, that is. -Tijana Martinovic



CURL UP AND DIE
THE ONE ABOVE ALL, THE END OF ALL THAT IS.
REVELATION RECORDS

I've seen this Vegas foursome terrorize some of the smaller San Diego venues. There is certainly no lack of energy and emotion in their music—and that was just stuff from their first album. Now, a slightly matured sound comes in the package of this 11-song collection that sounds incredible at high volume. For me, certain hardcore music is like staring into an abstract painting for long

periods of time: you let it mesh with your own issues. CUAD is one of these bands. The album art is creative and strange, giving the listener a chance to try and sing along with the lyrics, which can be difficult to follow at times but worth it, being intriguing and poetic. -Thomas Murray



DEFLESHED
RECLAIM THE BEAT
REGAIN

Swedish metal trio Defleshed are somewhat of an unknown quantity in the U.S., but RECLAIM THE BEAT seeks to raise the awareness of this pummeling powerhouse. The 12-track offering conjures up some meat-and-potatoes extreme metal bursting with hearty chunks of thrash metal's speed and precision and death metal's ominous overtones. Songs like the relentless "Chain

Reaction" and the supercharged cover of Motley Crue's "Red Hot" cry out for pumping your fists and banging your head with gleeful abandonment, while the crushing evilness of "Under Destruction" will leave you gasping for air. If you're looking for something wicked yet refreshing, RECLAIM THE BEAT is an album that will satisfy. www.defleshed.de -Mike SOS



LISTEN TO STUPID PRANK CALLS
SKRATCHMAGAZINE.COM



DISCIPLE
DISCIPLE
EPIC RECORDS

Disciple has been around for 10 years, made six albums, toured America and Europe, and won many awards. Disciple has taken the music of Warrant and Extreme and added some Linkin Park sound bites. There is no question that Disciple's members are all expert musicians. And lead singer Kevin Young is a really great vocalist. He has real authority over the notes, while maintaining an edge. Very ballsy. The hair-band influence on Young gives him the ability to be sweet or beautiful, leading right into his aggression. But Disciple is a hair-band at heart. I guess there are some Dokken kids out there—and you guys should all run and get Disciple. Otherwise, let this one go. -H. Barry Zimmerman



DIVIDE THE DAY
PRETTY GIRLS WITH UGLY BOYS
PLUTO RECORDS

Southern California's Divide the Day is a great combination of styles. Mike Patterson (guitar), Billy Haig (bass), Jeff Metajaw (guitar and keyboards), and Mike Hernandez (drums) spend their time being super clever, intense, playing the groove, and rockin' out. This is very good. But Patterson is also adding the screamo/muffle cry, which is the new black (by which I mean boring). But there is main vocalist Joe Nichy, who has a very sweet tone and a nice sincere quality. Divide it all up, and Divide the Day has produced a good disc. PRETTY GIRLS WITH UGLY BOYS is a 100% modern rock disc with potential to go all the way. -H. Barry Zimmerman



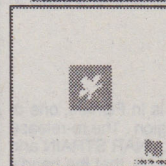
EMBRACE TODAY
WE ARE THE ENEMY
DEATHWISH

Embrace Today's latest release finds the straight-edge Boston quintet as seething as ever. Yet despite the 12-track sojourn's undeniable undercurrent of brutality, there's a sheen of majesty to songs like "The Immortal" and the dynamic title track that sets this band apart from your average chugging hardcore crew. Almost sounding if Hatebreed merged with Pantera, WE ARE THE ENEMY transcends clichés and stands out as an album whose metallic melodies, scornful screaming, bestial breakdowns, and ominous hardcore ruthlessly jump for your jugular without regret. www.deathwishinc.com -Mike SOS



EXTOL
THE BLUEPRINT DIVES
CENTURY MEDIA

Extol's stunning new release is just the album you need, as this 13-track barrage of jaw-dropping, genre-hopping, mature savagery will convert even the most stubborn of metal fans who think they've heard it all. Pushing boundaries (much like Opheth, but with their ears a little more open to the mainstream), songs like "Gloriana", "Void", and "From the Everyday Mountain Top" display a band whose unmistakable Norwegian roots are contorted in ways never before heard, yielding the type of provocative listening experience reserved for bands such as Faith No More, Neurosis, and Melvins. Staying heavy yet straying away from formulaic compositions, Extol's latest album is a rousing work of a band unafraid to go the extra mile. www.centurymedia.com -Mike SOS



FIN
I MISS THE MESS
SELF-RELEASED

The debut full-length release from this L.A.-based emo-pop quartet is a brooding introduction to a band that is sure to raise more than a few eyebrows. With a sound that vacillates between Radiohead and Coldplay, this band has come together with a sound bristling with passion and intensity. The tracks are at times ambient, anthemic, and pop-oriented. While the band has only been together since 2004, its exclusively West Coast shows have been sell-outs, with a loyal following developing for the band. Perhaps the only real miss on this deliciously dark album is the second track, "So Now Why?"—the song the group considers its best chance for a #1 hit. This band is much better suited doing what it does best: bringing forth a gloomy, British-influenced catalogue of atmospheric tunes. All in all, this is a terrific debut. -Dug



FIRE WHEN READY
AS THE SKY STARED DOWN WITH ANGRY CLOUDS
REIGNITION

Not sounding terribly different than fellow emo-rockers Coheed & Cambria, Saves the Day, and Thursday, Fire When Ready's latest album is an exercise in guitar sensibility. Purely driven by the strung electric instrument, most tracks feature the switches between clean and electric; while singer Brandon Musa belts like an alternate Daryl Palumbo. Fans of the genre will likely gobble this up, as each song is carefully crafted to feature all the emotional stop-and-go traffic one would desire—along with the patented Warped Tour hooks made popular by Thursday. Check them out at www.myspace.com/firewhenready to get some samples. -Ringo



FIVE BOLT MAIN
VENTING
ROCK RIDGE

Five Bolt Main's VENTING is a textbook example of an album that would have sold a million copies had it been released just a few years before it was. The band plays radio-ready nu-metal with the perfect amount of edge and skill to win them numerous fans—that is, if they had written it while nu-metal still dominated KROQ. It's unfortunate, as this band most likely would have ranked up right against Godsmack, Puddle of Mudd, and System of a Down, but I fear it might be too late for them, even with instantly catchy tracks like "The Gift" and "Slip". I'm sure that songwriter Chris Volz's work will be appreciated by those still into the genre, but the mass appeal of it has worn off. If the aforementioned bands intrigue you, then I would highly recommend hunting this album down. -Ringo

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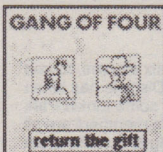
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**GANG OF FOUR
RETURN THE GIFT**
V2

All you little girly fans of Franz Ferdinand, Bloc Party, and the like, bow down, 'cause daddy has come home! After over 20 years Gang of Four have returned in all their influential glory. The aptly-titled RETURN THE GIFT finds the band re-recording 14 of their seminal hits: "To Hell With Poverty", "I Love a Man in a Uniform", "Damaged Goods", etc. Even though GO4's sound has been ripped off over and over again, they prove that these sure aren't just damaged goods. Legends never die. The songs prove the importance of their brand of dance-punk with dirty yet playful guitar riffage and sex-drenched, angst-ridden vocals like a cross between The Crass and Duran Duran. The biggest difference this time around was the opportunity to give the drums their due, and the result is a more in-your-face drum and bass ready to spank the shit out of their unruly children! For more info, visit www.gangoffour.us. -Norberto Gomez, Jr.



**GO IT ALONE
THE ONLY BLOOD BETWEEN US**
RIVALRY RECORDS

THE ONLY BLOOD BETWEEN US is a kick-ass hardcore disc. Go It Alone is full of fury, spit, and screaming-down-your-throat attitude. THE ONLY BLOOD BETWEEN US is their debut full-length CD. Some of the songs that float to the top of the heap for me are "Water Finds It's Own Level" (sic), "Flatline", and opener "Cold Winter". Go It Alone has delivered. And, the band has cool stickers too. Go and invest. -H. Barry Zimmerman



**HANK JONES
SATURDAYS OF THUNDER**
UNDECIDED RECORDS

There's a certain attitude hardcore bands have to live up to be tougher than the next guy. These rules don't seem to apply to Hank Jones on their newest release, SATURDAYS OF THUNDER. Don't get me wrong, though: it's filled with hard-hitting, balls-to-the-wall rock with unmercifully harsh vocals. Those vocals from the mouth of Mike Torti are consistent throughout this effort and bring the lyrics to life with emotion and power. Normally, non-stop screaming would bug me to the point of turning it off and never going back again, but that didn't happen with this album. The guitars produce simple but exact riffs that generate a feeling of pure adrenaline. SATURDAYS OF THUNDER comes off as an honest account of what this band is about: music minus attitudes and egos. www.undecidedrecords.com -Matt Edmund



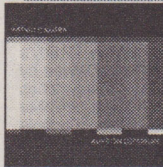
**HOGNOSE
EL SOMBRERO**
ARCLIGHT RECORDS

I have no fucking Earthly idea what Hognose are going for on this album. First off, album art of hogs in cowboy clothes and song titles like "Weedbilly" give the impression that this is some sort of rockabilly act. At the start, they do seem to be just that, with strong, slick, rocking guitar that has a very vintage appeal. However, the rest of the album goes from this sound to something resembling a really lazy and shitty Judas Priest by way of the vocal delivery and cheesy '80s metal riffs and penis-size-proving solos. Worst of all, most of the tracks clock in at more than five minutes (with "Muffin" being nearly nine!), which simply draws out their already-boring and confusing music. No cohesiveness and no clear concept or original sound leads to very depressing and earache-inducing work. -Norberto Gomez, Jr.



**IN FLAMES
LUNAR STRAIN/SUBTERRANEAN**
REGAIN

At the forefront of the Swedish metal brigade is In Flames, one of the most visible and popular bands from the region. The re-release of their first two albums from 1994 and 1995, LUNAR STRAIN and SUBTERRANEAN, marks the first time in the U.S. that the band's entire catalog is available. For those familiar with the band's current Ozzfest-friendly sound, these albums may be a bit surprising at first, as they express a more raw-sounding band, especially vocally, as current lead singer Anders Friden didn't join the fold until 1997. The band's staple, flavorful fretwork, is still greatly featured, and the relentless metal template that In Flames helped to create is here in all of its early glories—especially on LUNAR STRAIN, where current Dark Funeral throat Mikael Stanne mans the microphone and leads the punishing procession. www.candlelightrecords.com -Mike SOS



**INSTANT CAMERA
ALIVE ON DEPARTURE**
WALL TO WALL

Instant Camera's debut brings to the listener a new-new-wave album that really isn't all that new. The typical allusions to The Cure, Duran Duran, and new-wave pioneers New Order are all present and accounted for, but with the most important element missing: substance. The tremendous lack of songwriting essence and originality is filled up by the usual synthesizers and buzzing guitars. The band seem determined to write music as if it were still 1987. The result we receive is 10 single-length tracks determined to butt heads with the next Interpol offering. A small revision in their style-driven technique could allow these boys to focus their technical talent (which is apparent) on songs with that extra energy that we music fans need. -Ringo



**JACKSON UNITED
WESTERN BALLADS**
MAGNIFICENT RECORDS

Riding high on the merit of his main project, The Foo Fighters, guitarist Chris Shifflett has released WESTERN BALLADS, a collection of catchy California pop/rock songs that he had been writing over the past few years. The strongest point of this album is that it sounds very little like The Foo Fighters, proving that Chris wants to and can do his own songs with just as much skill as Grohl displays in the Foes. "All the Way" and "Fell Into" seem to be the standout tracks, both with gripping chord progressions and feel-good melodies that remind one of Pavement and former Shifflett group No Use for a Name. Very much worth your time and money, this album is guaranteed extended rotation for its joyous teenage characteristics and lasting refrains. -Ringo



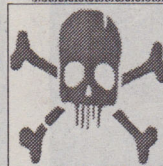
**JOHNNY COCK AND THE NUTS
TEAR YOU A NEW ONE**
BITCHSLAP

After some deep analyzing of TEAR YOU A NEW ONE, it's safe to guess that California's Johnny Cock and the Nuts isn't a serious rock band like Coldplay, but instead a tongue-in-cheek punk rock band whose bathroom humor, three-chord assaults, and sneering lead vocals have all the charm of an unruly third-grade classroom. This 26-track tour de force contains a full studio release and a complete live show (taped on the night of the birth of the lead singer's son—how's that for punk rock dedication?!). Mixing the wares of NOFX, Dead Kennedys, and Suicidal Tendencies, this disorderly trio's penchant for stirring the pot and bringing the party back to punk rock is their best trick. www.bitchslaprecords.com -Mike SOS



**JUSTIN EVANS
ALLUSIONS WITHIN**
SELF-RELEASED

The song writing on this album is a bit simple, with very basic rhyming lyrics, but it's not half bad. Again, I've heard a lot worse. Once my Music Business teacher told me that for every hit song you write you write 100 duds, so get use to it. Unless you've already written well into 200 songs, chances are every song you write isn't going to be the absolute best in other people's eyes. I really enjoyed track 7 off of this album, "Now We Stand", it was a decently written song with some nice tunes to back it up. Throughout this album you can hear Justin trying to reach a softer, gentler side of himself, but when it comes down to it; his best songs are the ones where he rocks out. -Audiophile



**LOSERS BEAT WINNERS
SELF-TITLED**
SPATI RECORDS

The debut album from this Nashville-based trio was born out of frustration with the country roots of their hometowns. While all three musicians have toured and performed behind such legends as Rosie Flores, Hank III, and Robert Plant, none of the country/rock mainstays satisfied these troubled young men. So the creative outlet to vent a clever, quick version of '80s punk was formed with Losers Beat Winners. The sound is vintage Husker Du meets The Descendents, as the boys grind out punk/pop gems one after another. The 12 songs on this disc all clock in at three minutes or less—the perfect length for a band that performs 12 tunes in its 30-minute sets. There's nothing ground shaking on this disc, but it's obvious that the band is having fun with this music. In this case, the good times are infectious. -Dug



**MATT POND PA
SEVERAL ARROWS LATER**
ALTITUDE

Hooray! I had been watching this band for the past several years, and I always knew that singer/songwriter Matt Pond had it in him to put out a record that defined him as a songwriter—and he most certainly does so with SEVERAL ARROWS LATER. This is the kind of record that makes you smile upon first listening to it, with its jingling guitars layered over harmonious and somber pop (not completely unlike Death Cab for Cutie and The New Amsterdams). Album opener "Halloween" is the strongest song that Pond has written. The dreamy qualities of this album prove that indie pop still has a long life ahead of it and shows no sign of slowing down. I wouldn't be surprised to see tracks from here picked up by THE OC sometime soon. I can see Summer kissing Seth already! Don't miss out! -Ringo



**MDC
MAGNUS DOMINUS CORPUS**
SUDDEN DEATH RECORDS

An acronym in frequent flux, MDC has assumed several meanings since the early '80s (MILLIONS OF DEAD COPS and MULTI-DEATH CORPORATION being earlier aliases/albums). In 18 truculent tracks of political punk, singer Dave Dictor spits loosely-laid lyrics at spontaneous speeds, preaching (predictably) against the government, punk-rock posers, police, and pop culture with the finesse of a high-school sophomore. Gashing guitars tear against a brazen bass in "Going Nowhere Faster Than You" as a determined Dictor spouts tales of drug-fueled times as if he's delivering a dramatic address. "Timmy Yo" pretentiously decries the scene's "sellouts" sans passion, as if Dictor's arhythmic rhymes were read unrehearsed from some gnarled notebook. Though the able band supplies a spirited soapbox, the speaker blares bluntly, blandly, losing his listeners. -Dane!



**MESHUGGAH
CATCH THIRTY THREE**
NUCLEAR BLAST

When you speak of metal bands that have carved their own niche, Meshuggah is one of the first acts that come to mind. The progressively punishing quartet's latest exercise in raising the bar is CATCH THIRTY THREE, a blistering assault unlike any on the scene today. With the innate ability to hypnotically suck you in with off-kilter rhythms and esoteric structures while pile-driving your skull with an ungodly sonic crush of the deepest low-end metal madness on the market, Meshuggah are quite possibly the most technically sound metal band on the planet, always striving to further their experiments of mechanically-inclined metal. This brand of severe music is sometimes hard to grasp for the layman, but for those ready to travel to new realms and push boundaries, Meshuggah is the band to hit up. www.nuclearblastusa.com -Mike SOS



**MIKE PARK
NORTH HANGOOK FALLING**
SUB CITY

Mike Park doesn't know the meaning of the word "failure," and NORTH HANGOOK FALLING, the second solo effort from the Asian Man Records owner/operator, is the proof. Once again promoting an anti-racist and pro-peace agenda, Park fuses his lighthearted humor with a discussion of serious political issues, especially those concerning his homeland of Korea. This time Park has employed the services of Chicago jazz indie quartet Colossal, making the album a more fleshed-out, cohesive venture than 2003's FOR THE LOVE OF MUSIC (which was, for the most part, just a man and his guitar). This album isn't more rocking, but the additional instrumentation lends depth to Park's soft strumming and mid-range vocals. Catchy, smart, and clever, this is Mike Park in top form. -David Barker

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**MUNICIPAL WASTE
HAZARDOUS MUTATION
EARACHE RECORDS**

This record came as a real surprise. On first inspection of the album art, I thought I might be listening to a crappy garage band, but truly, HAZARDOUS MUTATION is a piece of art. With a fabulous metal intro, the first track explodes into a true hardcore album. Metal riffs are placed in songs throughout, but the overwhelming presence of hardcore punk is most apparent. You can check out Municipal Waste on tour with Converge this

November. I speculate that Municipal Waste puts on a great show. -Luke Skywalker



**NODES OF RANVIER
THE YEARS TO COME
FACEDOWN**

Sioux Falls, SD quintet Nodes of Ranvier return with a 12-track release that falls in line with much of the contemporary metalcore on the scene today. Packing a wallop laden with melody and bruising rhythms alike, "The Dawning Age" is a track that old-school thrashers and new fans can enjoy equally, while the title track is armed with a demonic vocal style that sounds like the merger of E-Town Concrete and older Avenged Sevenfold and rocks out with unabashed intensity. Leaning towards the more commercial side of heavy music, THE YEARS TO COME is a great addition to those who are digging both their older brother's thrash albums and the current crop of heavy bands fortified with melodic musings and anthemic choruses. www.facedownrecords.com -Mike SOS



**NORTH LINCOLN
TRUTH IS A MENACE
NO IDEA RECORDS**

The second full-length debut from this Michigan trio is a fast-paced 12-song manifesto that questions the American dream. With a plethora of tunes that ask questions and don't necessarily provide answers, the band often comes off like Brando in THE WILD ONES. "What are you rebelling against?" asks the pretty barmaid. "What've you got?" answers Brando. But the one thing

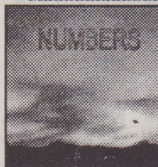
Brando didn't have was some catchy pop-punk tunes with a biting edge. The songs do a fine job of capturing the existential crisis of manic depression, with its cyclical mood swings, alcohol and drug dependence, and constant search for the meaning of life. There is one tune on the album, "Jeane", that actually has the line "Go buy every single Smiths record you can find!" listed as the lyrics instead of the actual lyrics. Like The Smiths, North Lincoln does a fine job of walking the fine line between depression and redemption. -Dug



**NUMBER ONE GUN
PROMISES FOR THE IMPERFECT
TOOTH & NAIL RECORDS**

How badly I wanted to love this album. Flipping through this month's selection of albums I was to review, PROMISES FOR THE IMPERFECT got me the most excited. Sadly, the album did not meet my expectations. Tracks like "We Are" and "Who You Are" stand out from the rest. Number One Gun's latest work is not all crap, but just not extraordinary. My sentiment is

summarized in a quote by John Malkovich from ROUNDERS: "Just like a young man, coming in for a quickie. I feel so unsatisfied." -Luke Skywalker



**NUMBERS
WE'RE ANIMALS
KILL ROCK STARS RECORDS**

It's Moog synthesizer appreciation time as we take a listen to the newest album from Numbers. The use of this unappreciated instrument is the driving force of WE'RE ANIMALS. Its eclectic sound mixes a brilliant use of rough guitars, as if aiming for a garage sound, while undertones of the Moog top it off with a very experimental, electronic ambient sound. There is a lot of Devo-influenced material here (e.g., "The Fuck You Garage"). The lead vocals from Indra Dunis (who is also the drummer) remind me of Bjork, especially on "Beast Life". This album grew on me each time I popped it into my stereo. It's subtle but driving sound left me very, very impressed and wanting more. Numbers are currently in the middle of a nationwide tour but are to return to West Coast in November. www.numbersmusic.com -Matt Edmund



**OLD TIME RELIJUN
2012
K RECORDS**

December 21, 2012, is the end of the world according to the Mayan Calendar, and this record is what it's gonna be like...according to vocalist Arrington de Dioniso. This is his foresight spewed in throaty screams à la Nick Cave at his most preacher-like (think Birthday Party) and Tom Waits at his most morbid. The Armageddon is delivered by minimal, brooding tracks driven by strong, doomy drum and bass and backed up by raunchy, demonic guitar. Overall, 2012 plays off like a Blue Explosion! album written and recorded in the pits of hellfire and brimstone! This is humorous and energetic old-time relljun, a sermon wherein the end of the world is damn interesting. For more info, visit www.krecords.com. -Norberto Gomez, Jr.



**OXFORD COLLAPSE
A GOOD GROUND
KANINE RECORDS**

I am a sucker for a different-sounding voice. It just makes you stop for a second and wonder how someone could actually sound that way. It's awe-inspiring...and sometimes totally annoying. This New York trio seems to bounce back and forth on that thin line. At times they make you scratch your head and wonder why would anyone in their right minds want to sound like that. At others, however, you just get dazed and lost in their chaotic, unrefined music. So jump off the bandwagon and join this fresh indie band for a wild, magical ride. I did. -Tijana Martinovic



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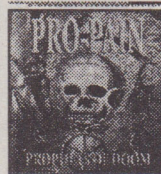
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PITBULL
THE VERY WORST OF...
DISCONNECTED RECORDS

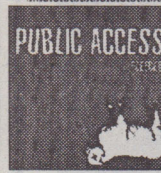
THE VERY WORST OF... is a compilation of six years (1989-1995) of work by Detroit's Pitbull. It's well over an hour, 22 tracks, and lots of out-of-print material and never-released gems. Pitbull is hardcore mainly due to the lead vocal style of Mikey. The band is a straight-up aggressive, rockin' machine with good ideas and the balls of a wild street dog. THE VERY WORST OF... is a great disc. It is brutal and serves as proof that this band that never got the props that they

deserved. They're a bad-ass band that lovers of intense hard rock will dig. The disc is full of highlight moments. I really enjoyed the live cuts. Very cool. THE VERY WORST OF... is a necessary evil. Your sweaty friends will love you. -H. Barry Zimmerman



PRO-PAIN
PROPHETS OF DOOM
CANDLELIGHT

The resilient hardcore metal band Pro-pain continues to trudge on with PROPHETS OF DOOM, the quartet's 12th release. Refusing to bow down to the music-industry machine, this fiercely independent troupe bring their brand of punishing low-end mayhem back with a discernible wartime theme. Tracks like the head-stomping "Hate Marches On" and the groovy thrash of "Operation Blood for Oil" have got the vintage Pro-pain wallop with a slab of social commentary thrown in. Three chords and the truth? It has served this NYHC-inspired outfit for over a decade...and they've come back stronger and more meaningful than ever on PROPHETS OF DOOM. www.candlelightrecordsusa.com -Mike SOS



PUBLIC ACCESS
FLEECE
POCKETFUL OF CHANGE RECORDS

The third release from this upstate New York quintet is a hard-rocking ska album in the vein of Reel Big Fish...not exactly cutting-edge material in 2005. I've always loved ska, and the harder the better, so I couldn't help but appreciate the edgy rhythms on this six-song EP. Whether a band fronted by two saxophone-playing vocalists can get a fair shake in this day and age is yet to be seen. The boys score big points with the lyrics on these tunes, as nearly every song slams the corporate interests that dictate what music we listen to. But it begins to sound like someone whistling in the graveyard, as the band lowers expectations by lamenting the loss of the ska scene and telling the listener that he's a sellout and won't like this stuff because the suits told them not to. Ska doesn't have to apologize for anything. -Dug



QUEEN + PAUL RODGERS
RETURN OF THE CHAMPIONS
HOLLYWOOD RECORDS

Wow, just wow. Who would have thought Queen would be back? And that Paul Rodgers, the lead singer of Bad Company, would become their new lead singer? It's mind boggling and AMAZING! I'm not the biggest Queen fan, I wouldn't like...kill for them or anything (although I think my mother and aunts would), but Paul Rodgers does a great job, he almost sounds like Freddy (R.I.P.) in a few of the songs, I don't see any Queen fan or any fan of decent music hating this, actually, I see the opposite, I see them LOVING it! I'm not the biggest fan of live recordings, or live recordings done in front of a large obnoxious audience, but this one is great. What else would you expect? It's FUCKING QUEEN! -Audiophile



RIC OCASEK
NEXTDAY
SANCTUARY

Some musicians have an undeniable pop sensibility that will more than likely allow them to continue writing carefully melded pop gems until the day they die. Ric Ocasek is known mostly for his work with The Cars, but even after The Cars crashed, he proved to be one of those rare musicians (like Paul McCartney and Robert Smith) who will never stop writing good songs. On his first solo album since 1997's TROUBLIZING, Ocasek blends the tracks together smoothly with sharply-produced drum machines, signature new-wave guitars, and more pop hooks than most bands could ever dream to squeeze into one album. While no individual songs stick out, each effort seamlessly follows the one before it with the kind of musical perfection that only a legend such as Ocasek could consistently execute. Fans of pop from the '70s and '80s should have no trouble digesting this one. -Ringo



RITUAL CARNAGE
I, INFIDEL
OSMOSE

Japan's answer to bands like Forbidden and Destruction is the long-running metal troupe Ritual Carnage, whose latest release is a 12-track album determined to put your neck in traction. Performing with the fires of '80s thrash and death metal in the forefront, the dual guitar attack flawlessly executed on burners like "Thirst for Blood" will reel you back to the glory days of the Bay Area and Tampa scenes: while the progressive transitions and unstable rhythmic patterns of "Do Not Resuscitate" sound like the perfect homage to Death. Wielding the power and fury of the predecessors of the extreme-metal genre without plagiarizing or bastardizing anything, I, INFIDEL is an unwavering display of technical metal that fans clamoring for the sounds of the old school should take note of. www.theendrecords.com -Mike SOS



ROSES ARE RED
CONVERSATIONS
TRUSTKILL RECORDS

Whenever you've given up on emo, there's always that one band to come out that gives you hope again. Nobody's perfect, and this band is far from it, but given some time, I think that we could be looking at the next big thing. The lyrics are like most emo lyrics: sappy and inventive. Singer Vincent Minervino has some truly awe-inspiring parts on this CD. Unfortunately, there aren't enough of them to make this CD something that goes above and beyond your average emo band. The instrumentals, however, are superb. The Gordner brothers are the perfect duet, with creative guitar riffs and solos that complement each other to the T. Kevin Mahoney's bass is probably the most outstanding part on this CD, although Michael Lasaponara's drums aren't too bad, either. If you don't feel like buying this CD now, make sure that you do get the next one this band puts out, as I'm predicting it will be worth the wait as this band develops and cleans up its production. -Tijana Martinovic

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SENTENCED THE FUNERAL ALBUM CENTURY MEDIA

Finnish death-metal troupe Sentenced have decided to call it a day on their latest release, the aptly-titled THE FUNERAL ALBUM. This 13-track disc finds the quintet saying goodbye with dollops of depressing mid-paced metal like "Her Last 5 Minutes" and sometimes picking up the morbidity on melodic death marches such as "Vengeance Is Mine". Despite the album's rather somber overall tone, it doesn't match up to the band's previous cold-hearted endeavors, making it a bit of a disappointing swan song. Nonetheless, THE FUNERAL ALBUM's melancholic meanderings are a fitting parting shot for a band fascinated with the art of dying from the get-go. www.centurymedia.com -Mike SOS



SHOTS FIRED SHOTS FIRED SIGNATURE TUNE

I had trouble deciding what this trio from Kansas City sounded like or what the music made me think of. That is probably due to the fact that this is less heavy and overbearing than most of what I listen to. This album is certainly more hipster and low-key than I am used to. They are compared to Husker Du (which I have never heard in my life), as well as Quicksand and Fugazi (which never sit in my CD player). As far as this album goes, there were songs I liked more than others and some songs I seriously despised. Basically, I found some of it to be annoying and disagreeable, like questionable Mexican food: sometimes it just isn't right. -Thomas Murray



SILVER WHITE DIARY BAD AFRO RECORDS

They say you shouldn't judge something by its cover, and it's true—especially in the case of the debut album from Norway rockers Silver. By the looks of the cover, I was expecting a horrid Guns N' Roses cover band. I found instead a decent mix of straight-ahead rock with influences ranging from early punk to glam rock. There is nothing out-of-this-world amazing about this release, but there is also nothing too terribly wrong with it, either. Its sound is quite poppy, with catchy vocals and riffs, and it's put together quite nicely. I would say that Silver played it safely when it came to making this album, with a mix of tunes that don't stray too far from a mainstream sound. For what it's worth, WHITE DIARY proves to impress within its boundaries but is far from exceptional. www.thesilverband.com -Matt Edmund



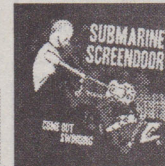
SIX LETTER WORD SIX LETTER WORD SELF-RELEASED

On first listen, Six Letter Word's five-song demo could be mistaken for a release by a mediocre emo cover act. Unfortunately, the band's completely unoriginal sound is all its own doing, as these five "new" recordings are just the result of a band copying its influences. Musically, they take a little Thursday and mix it with some Movielife to create something we heard over and over again. Lyrically, it gets worse. The band blatantly rips off song concepts and themes from Taking Back Sunday. And if I hear another emo act talk about slitting a body part for love, I'm going to lose it. Seriously, who do these guys think they are, Picasso? I have a six-letter word for this act: talent. You can return when you get some of your own. -Jeff Strack



STRATAGEME RECESSION JUDAH RECORDS

Stratageme is tough act to describe. Led by David Vine and helped by Megan McDuffie on keyboards, synthesizer, and vocals, RECESSION is a seven-song mixed musical bag. There's an instrumental titled "Apologies to Jon Bates", but also "Artichoke Hearts", a long one with punkish vocal segments. Vine adds many keyboard sounds to his mix, including the prog-y section that stands out during "James vs. the Reds". Vine wrote the music and words to all of these tracks, with the exception of "Asia Minor", which features McDuffie's lyrics. Although there is nothing specifically jazzy here, one still supposes that jazz has at least subconsciously influenced Vine's music. You can pick it up during moments of "Apologies to Jon Bates", as well as in a few other sections. But rather than being a "recession", there is actually a whole lot of progression going on with Stratageme. -Dan MacIntosh



SUBMARINE SCREENDOOR COME OUT SWINGING SELF-RELEASED

How can a punk release NOT be sick as shit when your mail influences are some of the best punk bands EVER? Sighting bands like Rancid, Anti-Flag, Propagandhi and Bad Religion as their inspiration this thrash-punk is awesome. It's loud, it's fast, and it's full of lyrics I can't understand (but still enjoy I'm sure). It kind of reminds me of one of my local favorite bands, Bullet Treatment. Ah I love those guys. I'll admit to it, I'm a fan of gutter-punk, but I still shower so don't give me that look or wrinkle your nose. If you're a fan of similar music you'd probably enjoy this band too. -Audiophile



SWEATMASTER SONGS WITH NO WORDS BAD AFRO RECORDS

The second release from this Finnish garage/grunge trio consists of two new tunes and six covers. There are cover songs of Minor Threat, Misfits, and The Modern Lovers on this disc, all hyped up with snappy confidence and the lo-fi rock treatment. Like with labelmates The Darkness, you're never really sure if this is a Spinal Tap moment or if these guys are as intensely serious about these tunes as it sounds. The two original tracks, "Song with No Words" and "Dirty Little Things", are provided as a preview of the next full-length from the band. The band's press release claims the title track is a "tango," but if it is, it's a tango like no other. Their original music sounds a lot like early White Stripes and The Hives. Sweatmaster does this style as well as anyone; but to separate themselves from a burgeoning pack of similar bands, this band will have to come up with a full new album of killer original music. -Dug



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**TEN 33
NIGHTMARE ON GRACE STREET
BLOOD AND INK RECORDS**

A superior hardcore punk album released this past July, NIGHTMARE ON GRACE STREET had me headbanging throughout its entirety. Ten 33's second full-length is put together in a solid format, mixing genres from metal to emotional rock 'n' roll with fluid transitions. The highlight occurs in the final track, as the band records an impromptu interview with Bill, a redneck who appeared on their last album. This five-piece from Richmond, VA, hope to be touring to a city near year and are hoping to be voted to play Cornerstone 2006. -Luke Skywalker



**THE AGONY SCENE
THE DARKEST RED
ROADRUNNER**

The Agony Scene's sophomore effort is a savage, soul-crushing slab of metalcore with dashes of devious death metal, as this Oklahoma quintet pull out all the stops to sonically beat the hell out of you. From the jackhammer drums that rip through your speakers on the title cut to the blistering Swedish metal guitars found on "Screams Turn to Silence" to the sinewy rhythm and venomous vocal hiss of "Scapegoat", this relentless 11-track affair is as close to a metalcore classic as you can get today. With as much brutality as memorable hooks, THE DARKEST RED's multitude of strengths make this album a definite purchase for fans currently wearing out their Killswitch and Unearth discs. www.roadrunnerrecords.com -Mike SOS



**THE BLOODY IRISH BOYS
DRUNK ROCK
SICK SAD RECORDS**

Though the name suggests some bar-brawling band of fiddle-fisted, accordion-carrying, Guinness-guzzlin' boyos from Boston with wearily-sung songs, pub-battering bagpipes, and a manhandled mandolin, The Bloody Irish Boys is a proud Celtic soul's solo project. DRUNK ROCK, a fusion of Irish folk and rampant punk-rock rowdiness, is shameless shamrock 'n' roll. Songs such as "Drink, Drink, Drink", "Beer Is Good, Beer Is Great", and "Pass Out on the Floor" specify a favorite subject that's referenced redundantly throughout the album. Though these songs sound similar to those on other Irish-rock records, some strange exceptions exist. Besides the singer's sourly slurred lines and some distorted strumming, the band's broad, interesting instrumentation is a clunky keyboard featuring fabricated fiddles and mechanical mandolins. These 13 tracks are carefully-constructed, structurally sound songs that, if performed by a bona fide band of bar-brawling bastards, would receive several raised pints of recognition. -Dane!



**THE DETROIT COBRAS
BABY
BLOODSHOT RECORDS**

The first thing you need to know about The Detroit Cobras is that this is not a songwriting band. In fact, BABY includes only one original song, "Hot Dog (Watch Me Eat)"—the first original song they've ever put on an album! But this approach is not such a bad thing, because lead vocalist Rachel Nagy is a fine soul shouter; and the group chooses excellent material. When you see names like Allen Toussaint and Bobby Womack in the writing credits, you know right away that the band has good taste. Although Nagy sings lead the most of the way through here, she at least allows Greg Cartwright and Kenny Tudrick to add a little male perspective during "Insane Asylum". The group even includes Meg White (of The White Stripes) in its video for "Cha Cha Twist", which is also included here. -Dan MacIntosh



**THE ESCAPED
SELF-TITLED
TKO RECORDS**

Albums by bands like The Escaped pose some poignant questions concerning punk's purpose. Is it a musically-motivated movement, meant to rouse revolution in an unimpressive industry impelled by big-business's pursuit of profit; or an aura, an air, something ethereal that surrounds the scene's sound? This six-song salvo is, musically, a melody-less mess. As viciously shouting vocalists spout punk-rock rhetoric—alternating so that both blatantly similar-sounding singers can contribute—drum fills fumble, stumble, and stammer behind the band. Darkened with distortion, the guitars growl, hammering harmonies against one another aggressively, supplying a solitary sense of flimsy stability. The Escaped's "loose, loud and fast" philosophy reflects an unremarkable mediocrity—though their intent, it seems, isn't melodic mastery. Maybe their music is a mere means to another end. Is it okay that this is a clumsy, clamorous collection plastered with weary power-chords so that the attitude and apathy that "punk-rock" implies is successfully expressed? -Dane!



**THE EVAN ANTHEM
SENS
MONO VS STEREO**

Known for whiny vocals and utterly naïve lyrics recalling their mistreatment while in high school, emo finds itself winding down as a force in the music world. The Evan Anthem is labeled as the recent incarnation of the near-dead emotional-rock movement. A little less whiny, better lyrics, and more thought-out structures by bands like The Evan Anthem shows the maturity of the genre. There is variation in the vocals (though nothing close to ballsy); and in songs like "Vegas", we find the instruments working nicely within an almost danceable track. Moments of Death Cab for Cutie vocal harmonies, and a patient understanding of mood and melody are also essential features of SENS. However, the mood stays somber throughout, without many eye-openers or jaw-droppers. This is part of the last hurrah of a dying genre, and the almost effortless feel of SENS seems to be saying, "We give up." For more info, visit www.theevananthem.com. -Norberto Gomez, Jr.

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THE FRANTIC A STORY OF BETRAYAL AND LUST SELF-RELEASED

This is anything but frantic. Starting off with a guitar ripping off Stone Temple Pilots' "Sex Type Thing" (which was a rip-off of Danzig's "Twist of Cain" to begin with), A STORY OF BETRAYAL AND LUST is nowhere near as grandiose as the title would suggest. This is very radio-friendly pop/rock at its most uninspiring. The vocal delivery is not creative; and as go the vocals, so goes the music. With straightforward song structures with boring guitar riffs and uninspiring drums and bass lines not worth remembering, The Frantic stubbornly chooses to be redundant in a world full of worthier bands for your friendly neighborhood SKRATCH reviewer's time and effort. Therefore, for more info, visit www.the-frantic.com. -Norberto Gomez, Jr.



THE GLOW THE GHOSTS ARE OUT BANKSHOT!

It's a wonderful thing when a band manages to successfully merge two normally contrasting ideas. The Glow does so by infusing the pop sensibility of Elvis Costello with the punk-rock soul of Richard Hell and Iggy Pop. With glowing organs and shining refrains, THE GHOSTS ARE OUT is an album that never lets the listener feel too down about songwriter Ben K.'s gin-soaked tales of heartbreak. Elements of ska-rockers The Specials occasionally poke their head in here, providing for an album that is diverse. I will admit to being caught a bit off guard by this release, as the album's gloomy street cover seems to be the antithesis of the band's musical mission. Fans of anyone from Rancid to Booker T. and the MGs will find this release more than just suitable. -Ringo



THE HIGH DIALS WAR OF THE WAKENING PHANTOMS RAINBOW QUARTZ

Psychedelic indie rock will never go out of style, and The High Dials understand its ingredients precisely. WAR OF THE WAKENING PHANTOMS is the Canadian quartet's sophomore release, and while the album cover might be reminiscent of The Beach Boys' SMILEY SMILE, The High Dials are more like The Zombies on ODESSEY AND ORACLE, though without the vocal harmonies. Abounding in lo-fi's breezy hooks and instrumentation, while including saxophones, mandolin, and banjo, WAR OF THE WAKENING PHANTOMS isn't just an excellent second effort, but it also functions as a cleverly-written ode to the better days of pop music—all while maintaining a modern edge. -David Barker



THE JONBENET THE PLOT THICKENS PLUTO

Some people (the overly P.C. and retarded) are not down with this Houston band's moniker. I think it's awesome, a fine homage to the murdered kiddie beauty queen. It may not be the most "tasteful," but that gives it charm. Anyway, THE PLOT THICKENS, The JonBenet's Pluto premiere, compiles their first two self-released EPs split (here, "Chapter II") and FIVE STORIES RETOLD ("Chapter I"). The eight tracks show a band playing edgy, creative, jarring hardcore with time changes galore and vocals that, upon first listen at least, are a bit disconcerting. I wasn't digging them too much, but after a couple listens, their weirdness (they're of a high register. The only person I can liken them to is the singer from The Peechees (though The JonBenet's Michael Murland throws in a ton of screams)) grew on me and supplement nicely the abrasive and chaotic instrumentation in which they're enveloped. -Janelle Jones



THE KALLIKAK FAMILY MAY 23RD 2007 TELL-ALL RECORDS

This is a work of pure mood, focused on creating an entire wall of sound through subtle electronic drones, minimal beats, haunting samples of tolling bells (e.g., "Bells in Bergamo"), and angelic female hums. Reminders of Brian Eno and his synthetic moody tinkering are obvious, as is the use of more organic instruments. Minimal acoustic arpeggios in "Guitar I" and "Guitar II" against the multi-layered atmospheres cause a subtle conflict that bands like Air and Radiohead (on KID A) have conquered to the point of perfection. What The Kallikak Family do, however, is mastermind a far heavier presentation through their instrumental tracks, each one leading successfully to the next, creating a flowing composition in the sense of John Cage and his masterpieces. Conceptually, MAY 23rd 2007 tells the story of various days in the life of one man all leading up to his death—in essence, a soundtrack to one man's life. An experimental and brave effort in our supposed A.D.-infested world. For more info, visit www.tellallrecords.com. -Norberto Gomez, Jr.



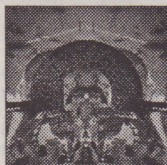
THE KNIVES SKIN FLICKS CRITERION RECORDS

What a sexy, sexy band. Sexy. And their song "Skin Flicks" off of their album sharing the same name is sexy as well. Why do I keep saying sexy? 'Cause they are! And their music just oozes sexy. Moving on from their sexiness, The Knives album SKIN FLICKS is a very well recorded, well produced, well written, and well played piece o' punk rock to listen to. If you're ever in L.A. and you want some sexy, sexy punks to watch, check out The Knives, or if you just want some bitchin' music, look no farther than this album. -Audiophile



THE NEW FLESH PARASITE! MAELSTROM

I'm having trouble discerning whether The New Flesh intended the production quality of PARASITE! to be an artistic part of their style of noise/metal/punk, or if it's merely the result of a low recording budget. These nine songs aren't necessarily bad, but the fact of the matter is that the production is so poor that you can only really tell that The New Flesh would be nuts in a live setting. Unfortunately, this album is barely listenable. It's a sludgy blast of feedback overload, the lyrics are hardly audible, and the music becomes a whirlwind of nausea-inducing chaos after a few minutes. Maybe that's what The New Flesh had in mind all along. -David Barker



**THE PLANET THE
YOU ABSORB MY VISION
SRC**

Part progressive rock in the vein of Rush (with atmospheric keys), part electro-clash with cascading drums, noisy melodic synthesizer, and wacky guitar fun, The Planet The are most definitely a band that plays off their eclectic sound. The title track is without a doubt the shining gem of the album, a perfect pop song in the band's own brand of robot-like, paranoid vocals to chaotically danceable drum and bass and distorted keyboards. The somewhat humorous track "Please Don't Kill Myself" hearkens back to the sense of detachment made famous by early Gary Numan and The Tubeway Army of the late '70s by way of semi-naïve vocals and a strong minimal, industrial sound that is more about the overall delivery than aggression. This is another tastefully playful and experimental album from underground nobodies that's worth your every listen. For more info, visit www.src.com. -Norberto Gomez, Jr.



**THE SEX RAYS
THE SEX RAYS
SELF-RELEASED**

The Sex Rays is a unique and very special outfit. The group is playing with brass theatrics and a style that's as ballsy as you please. This album, the band's second (the first was APOCALIPSTICK NOW on Bazoom! Records), reminds me of Rocky Horror meets The Cockettes in a heavy-metal fantasy. In other words, THE SEX RAYS is fun and ready to be blasted loud.

Featuring three lead singers and many former members of The Punk Rock Orchestra, The Sex Rays has produced a four-star disc. Some of my very favorite tracks are "Lolita Backwards", "The Beast Inside the Babysitter", and "God Save the Spem". I love The Sex Rays. And anyone who wants to laugh while rocking out will, too. -H. Barry Zimmerman



**THE SHOWDOWN
A CHORUS OF OBLITERATION
MONO VS. STEREO**

The Showdown is an outfit who have their fingers on the pulse of the new wave of American metal movement. On the Tennessee natives' 10-track release, you'll hear a flurry of Swedish-influenced guitar runs (such as the ones heard in "Iscairiot" and "From the Mouth of Gath Comes Terror"); furious vocals sounding like a cross between Lamb of God, Testament, and Shadows Fall; and a plethora of headbanging rhythms and raging drum parts that display the band's understanding and love of the metal genre. While the market may be saturated with a lot of bands doing basically the same thing, A CHORUS OF OBLITERATION exhibits a band who do a little bit of everything very well—a characteristic that puts them high on the list of new metal bands to explore. www.monovsstereo.com -Mike SOS



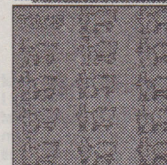
**THE SUSHI CABARET CLUB
LIVING ON MOUNTAINS
SELF-RELEASED**

The second full-length release from this unsigned quartet of expatriates from Nagoya, Japan, is a knockout. With anthemic choruses, acoustic ballads, and hard-rocking radio-friendly hits, this band has what every manager looks for. Unfortunately, good managers are on short supply in Japan. Lead singer David Wallace is Scottish and sounds like a cross between Van Morrison and Springsteen. The rest of the band hail from England, Australia, and America—truly an international effort. The 10 songs on this disc are almost too slick, with a sound similar to Train, Live, or Boston's Celtic wunderkind Jabe. While the songwriting is good and showcases this group's substantial musical talent, the real thing that separates this band from the pack are Wallace's stellar vocals. Hopefully these guys can find a label to buy them plane tickets to L.A....or they might spend the rest of their careers playing in sushi bars. -Dug



**THIS IS ME SMILING
SELF-TITLED
THE VINYL SUMMER**

From the various animal silhouettes adorning the disc to the beautiful harmonies and pop chops on their self-titled debut, it's apparent that This is Me Smiling exemplifies the word "cute." The Chicago quartet displays a knack for catchy, endearing songwriting influenced by artists ranging from Elliott Smith and Ben Folds to Saves the Day and Air. These 13 songs are a testament to undeniably memorable music that bridges the gap between indie rock and radio-ready pop. Fans of Hey Mercedes, The Stereo, Motion City Soundtrack, and even The All-American Rejects will appreciate what this album brings to the table. If this is indicative of the days to come, This is Me Smiling has a future bursting with sunshine. -David Barker



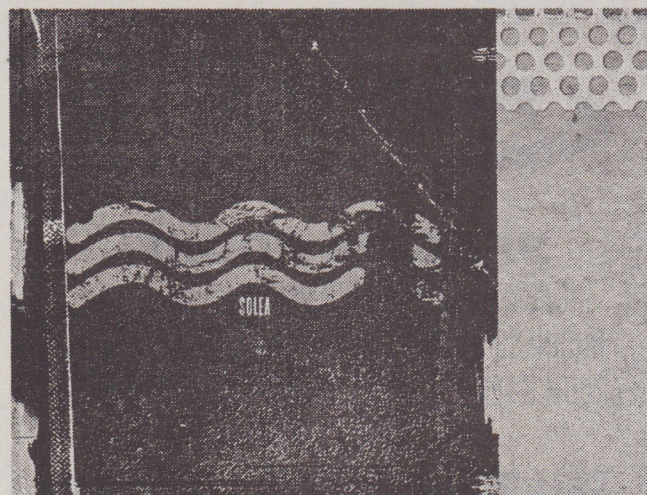
**TODD
PURITY PLEDGE
SOUTHERN RECORDS**

This is straight-forward, aggressive hardcore rock, which means nothing but ripping guitars, thudding drums, and chugging bass lines. This becomes redundant and monotonous without any ballsy attempts at surprising the listener. The same way a track starts is pretty much how it ends—which is boring. Vocally, as one would expect in aggressive music, there is not much difference from the redundancy of the instruments. Being hardcore music, the vocalist feels that he must stereotypically do the whole throaty, yelling thing on every single track, with no attempt at variation. This leads to a VERY boring, been-there-done-that CD only worth a 15-second listen at the beginning of every track and then a swift throw into the trash. With track titles like "Cracker Jack Asshole", "Sharon After Prom", and "Butler's Portion", the band must have a sense of humor. However, if so, it's lost by their very unintelligible vocals. For more info, visit www.southern.com. -Norberto Gomez, Jr.



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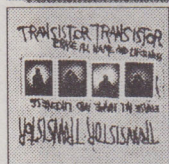
TOMMY GUTLESS
DEATH, HONOR, OR GLORY BOUND
STREET ANTHEM RECORDS

The first fact that you should know about Tommy Gutless is that there is no Tommy Gutless: Tommy Gutless is the name of the band. The second fact that you need to know about Tommy Gutless is that the band is an anthem-oriented Social Distortion wannabe outfit. The themes on DEATH, HONOR, OR GLORY BOUND is an Americana experience. This is a real band of flag-wavers. There is absolutely not one original idea or progression on DEATH, HONOR, OR GLORY BOUND—but I don't think that's the point. This is a patriotic parade. So, if you dig that parade, buy it up. Otherwise, let it go. -H. Barry Zimmerman



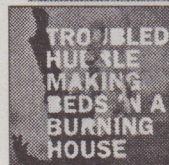
TORCHE
TORCHE
ROBOTIC EMPIRE RECORDS

Torche makes heavy rock with low-end grooves that tend to drag its songs along like bloated corpses in a bloody war zone. This music is thudding, sludgy, woofer-testing guitar rock. Nevertheless, when "Vampyro" comes along about midway, one hears a poppy hook and a singable chorus! Another break from form is "Fire", which features a Cult-like chiming electric guitar part. But after this brief spurt of light, the group slips right back into its weighty dirge obsession with "Holy Roar", which is yet more base-driven, bottom-heavy music with echoey lead vocals. Lyrically, this band is not subtle, as a title like "Fuck Addict" perfectly exemplifies. About the only wit revealed is the slightly punning song title of "Holy Roar". Torche's music is a little bit like what indigestion would sound like if it were an actual musical style. Who really wants more indigestion?! -Dan MacIntosh



TRANSISTOR TRANSISTOR
ERASE ALL NAME AND LIKENESS
LEVEL PLANE RECORDS

Though I may be the wrong person to review this record, as screamo and hardcore are a rare find in my record collection, ERASE ALL NAME AND RECORD can comfortably find a place on my shelf, because this is impressive work. After several listens, I was finally able to digest the noise coming out of my stereo and grasp the reality that this is a very strong record. Transistor Transistor is a band that has balls the size of grapefruits, holding nothing back while attacking the listeners with a challenging blend of fuzz guitars, astonishingly intense vocals, and a backbeat that rocks and is even funky. Fans of Fugazi, The Blood Brothers, and even Black Flag will enjoy the transition that Transistor Transistor has gone through on an album that is any hardcore junkie's dream. -Jeff Strack



TROUBLED HUBBLE
MAKING BEDS IN A BURNING HOUSE
LOOKOUT! RECORDS

The fifth full-length release from this happy-go-lucky quartet of Illinois natives is a pop masterpiece. With a sound inspired by Modest Mouse and Barenaked Ladies, Troubled Hubble jettisons the dark and ominous and embraces everything happy. With songs like "14,000 Things to Be Happy About", "Safe & Sound", and "Even Marathon Runners Need to Nap", the band creates its own world of clever lyrics matched to poppy indie guitar riffs. Sometimes it's harder to make art that doesn't depress. While comical, these songs are fairly complicated. The band finds room in its energetic music to include violins, violas, trumpets, and Latin percussion. It's like an indie cacophony, as the group mixes these apparently disparate elements into seamless songs with catchy hooks. Though this is the fifth album from this group (the first on Lookout! Records). Look for big things in the future from these guys. -Dug



TSAR
BAND GIRLS MONEY
TVT RECORDS

Attitude oozes out of the latest effort from Los Angeles's own TSAR. This 10-song disc is loaded with catchy, cliched rock riffs and vocals that at times sound just too sweet for my liking. They seem to be going for a post-glam rock, Sunset Strip hair-band feeling that left me half satisfied (if that). I was not impressed with the lyrical content, which seemed to be thrown together. It's quite easy to name a song and repeat its title over and over again (as in "Straight"). I was impressed with the guitars throughout this album, as they hammer out some hot licks; but the use of echo effects on the vocals become quite humorous and annoying. Although I can say that there is potential here, the cliched sound left me bored and searching for something else to satisfy my musical cravings. -Matt Edmund



ULTRATONE
PASS IT ALONG
DADORK

I really feel like a big jerk when I am forced to do this, but my journalistic integrity forces me to: Ultratone's PASS IT ALONG might be the most boring album I've heard this year. I'm not trying to be rude, but I can honestly say that my eyes began to close and my neck became weak when I tried to get through this 13-track release. I'm no stranger to easy listening, as I'm a huge fan of lead singer Joe Scheirich's personal picks of Jeff Buckley and Pat Metheny, but this album is simply dreary. Edge of U2 seems to have patented modern guitar delay, and Ultratone is no stranger to using it. The generic songs begin to clump themselves together with little or no definition. I cannot recommend this album to anyone looking for interesting or inspiring music. Sorry, Ultratone. Maybe next time? -Ringo



UNDERWATER CITY PEOPLE
YOU OF ALL PEOPLE
UCP RECORDS

If you're new to UCP, this record will not only introduce you to the most phenomenal new indie band from beneath the waves, but it will prove to your music-snob friends that you actually have taste! Don't let the cutesy cover art and pop sensibility fool you: this album is packed to the gills with bitterness and melancholy, delivered masterfully as heartfelt confessionals rather than whiny complaints. The bait is enviably clever musicianship (think Pixies/Breeders if they were on Dischord Records), and the hook is empathetically lyrical honesty that will touch every shade of emotion your little heart holds. It's some of the best songwriting I've heard in a long time from a band with enough promise to sink a submarine. www.underwatercitypeople.com -Jeff Penalty



VALENCIA
THIS COULD ALL BE A POSSIBILITY
I SURRENDER RECORDS

As countless emo and pop-punk acts continue to burst onto radio and television, it is becoming harder and harder to stand out from the pack. Philadelphia's Valencia has found the key to visibility: great songs. As the newest act to Rob from Midtown's record label, this five-piece has an incredible ability to create memorable tunes that seem fresh yet incredibly familiar. 10 songs that strut with confidence, this ensemble's sound is reminiscent of Fall Out Boy and The Starting Line. With the right amount of exposure and word of mouth, there is no reason why Valencia can't reach the heights achieved by its predecessors. Here's to hoping that Valencia achieves the success that THIS COULD ALL BE A POSSIBILITY warrants, as it is an impressive introduction to what should be a great career. -Jeff Strack



VARIOUS ARTISTS
GENERATIONS A HARDCORE COMPILATION
REVELATION RECORDS

With 16 different bands from all over North America on Revelation Records, listeners get a chance to hear how far the hardcore and punk scenes have evolved. Sadly, by track 6, the music begins to blend together. Even though this album contains only exclusive tracks, it seems like Revelation chose 18 generic singles. Surprisingly, the liner notes are very complete, including not only the band and song title, but the lyrics and lists of band members. This would be a great record to own if you are completely ignorant of what other music is available—or just of what Revelation Records has to offer. -Luke Skywalker



VARIOUS ARTISTS
LISTEN TO BOB DYLAN
DRIV-THRU

I love Bob Dylan, I truly, honestly do. This two disc compilation isn't that bad, I've heard worse. With bands like Socratic, Something Corporate, Steel Train, etc, it does appeal to the younger masses, though isn't as good as the real thing. Then again what is now of days? And how many 14 year olds do you know that would willingly listen to something their parents (wait, is it grandparents now?) would listen to? Only through trickery my friends, would something like this occur. Thank you, Drive-Thru, for tricking stupid 14 year olds into listening to something well written and, in some cases, well played. -Audiophile



VARIOUS ARTISTS
PUNK ROCK IS YOUR FRIEND 6
KUNG FU

Kung Fu Records has put out another spirited punk-rock compilation for befriending a whole new crop of ears with PUNK ROCK IS YOUR FRIEND 6. Opening with the Beach Boys-esque power punk of The Vandals and including bands such as Tsunami Bomb, H2O, Throwrag, and Bouncing Souls, this 23-track collection spotlights some of the best and brightest punk bands that haven't been overexposed to the point of nausea yet still have some notoriety. Bouncy tracks like Audio Karate's "She Looks Good" among the harder-edged punk of Underminded and the uncompromising rawness of The God Awfuls offer up a wide array of punk today, giving this comp a little something for everyone to enjoy. www.kungfurecords.com -Mike SOS



VARIOUS ARTISTS
XROXX ROCKS!! VOLUME 1
XROXX

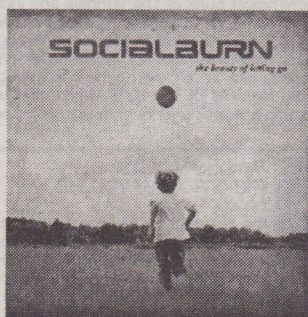
The blueprint for this compilation is a great idea: an Internet radio station creates a record with unsigned bands in order to get exposure for both the groups involved and the site itself. While it may be a great scheme, there is one major drawback: most of the songs aren't any good. 15 tracks of second-rate emo/punk/ska artists that aren't signed because they don't deserve to be, this compilation is good thought, bad execution. Perhaps volume 2 will have some better artists. If not, then XROXX.com needs to find a better way to promote its station. -Jeff Strack



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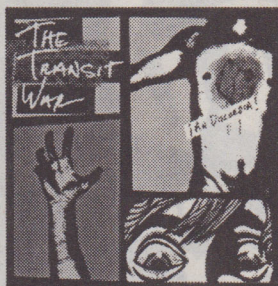
www.socialburn.com

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cat# OPR0024

THE TRANSIT WAR

"Ah Discordial"

The Transit War creates a melodic masterpiece of pensive indie rock streaming from a place of both beauty and intensity. The band's sound engulfs a moment of rawness and elegance that few bands achieve. Features: "Kerosene" & "MayDay". Available in stores Jan 2006, available online and at shows Oct 2005!

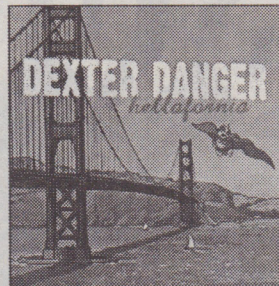


cat# OPR0019

MOTION PICTURE DEMISE

"rebuild/reform"

This five piece band; Motion Picture Demise hails from Richmond, VA. With MPD's amazing guitar riffs along with they're chilling melodic vocals, this CD will make your blood run hot! "Rebuild/Reform" is a must have for any indie post hardcore / punk enthusiast. That means you!

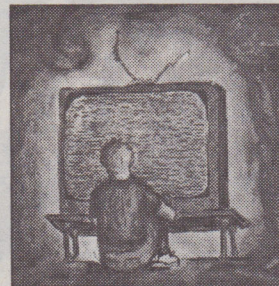


cat# OPR0023

DEXTER DANGER

"Hellaforia"

Hellaforia ranges from punk to rock to jazz elements. Dexter Danger has strived to create a maturely crafted rock-influenced punk album. Containing such tracks as: The Rise and Fall of Erica Vallejo, Far Away, System Overload and so many more tracks that this record will have you singing your ass off!



cat# OPR0022

SLOPPY MEATEATERS

"Conditioned By The Laugh Track"

Catchy melodies, thought provoking lyrics, and a variety of life altering experiences make up the new album by the punk rooted rock group. Driving guitars over a solid rhythm section, together with familiar vocals create a well produced power laden alt-rock album that will appeal to indie, punk, and emo fans alike.

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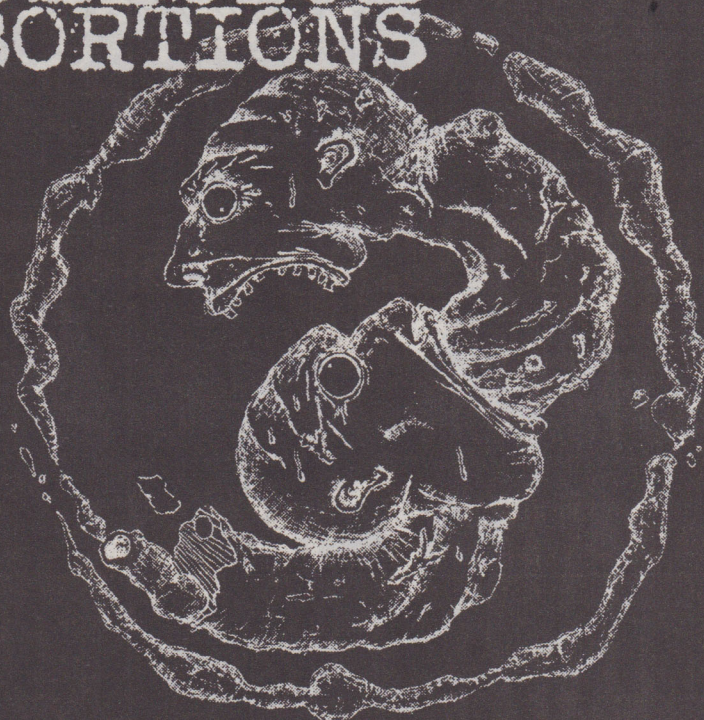


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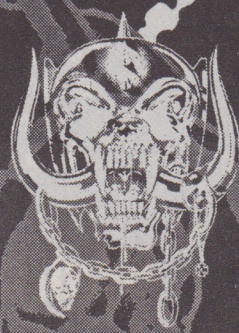
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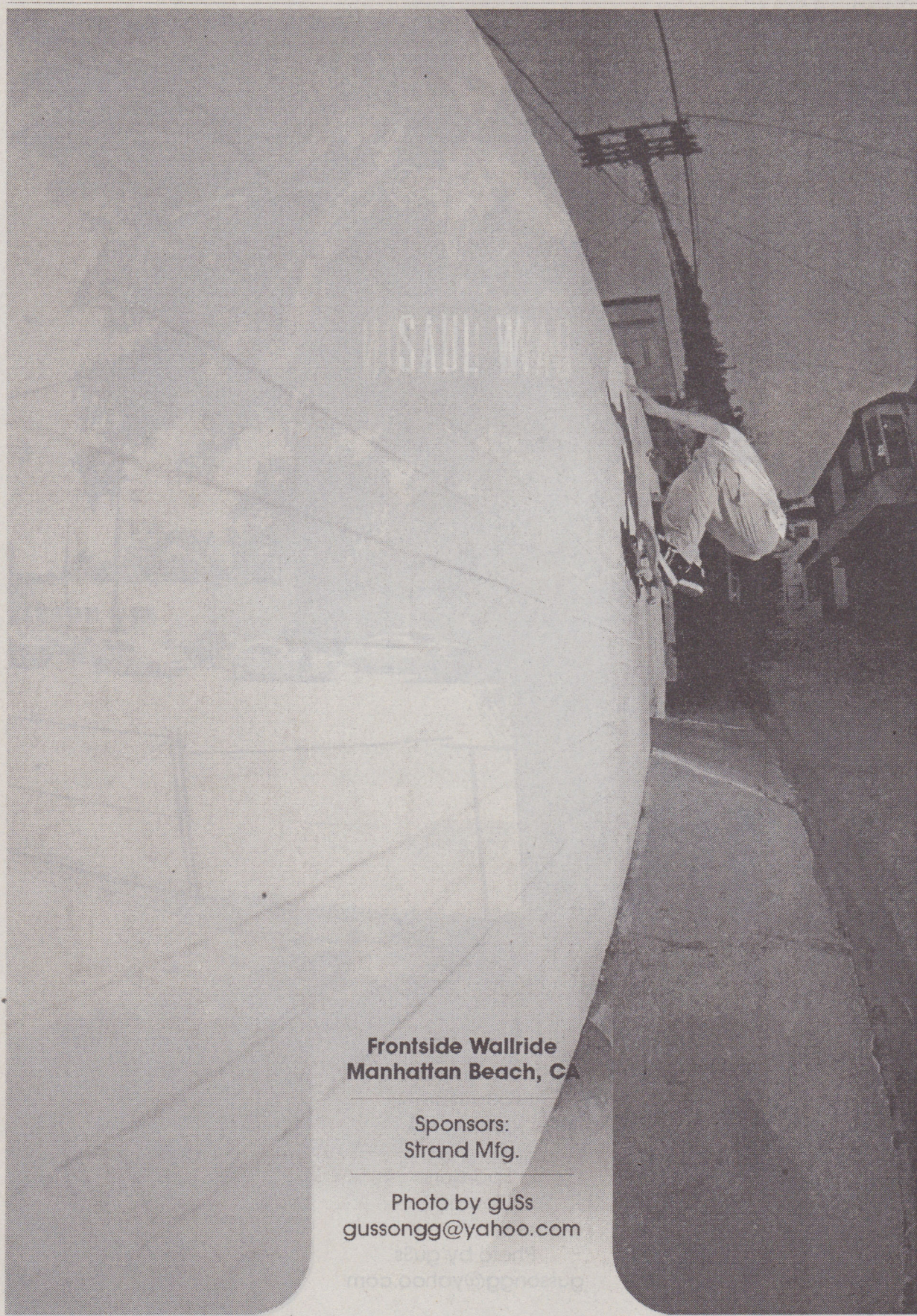


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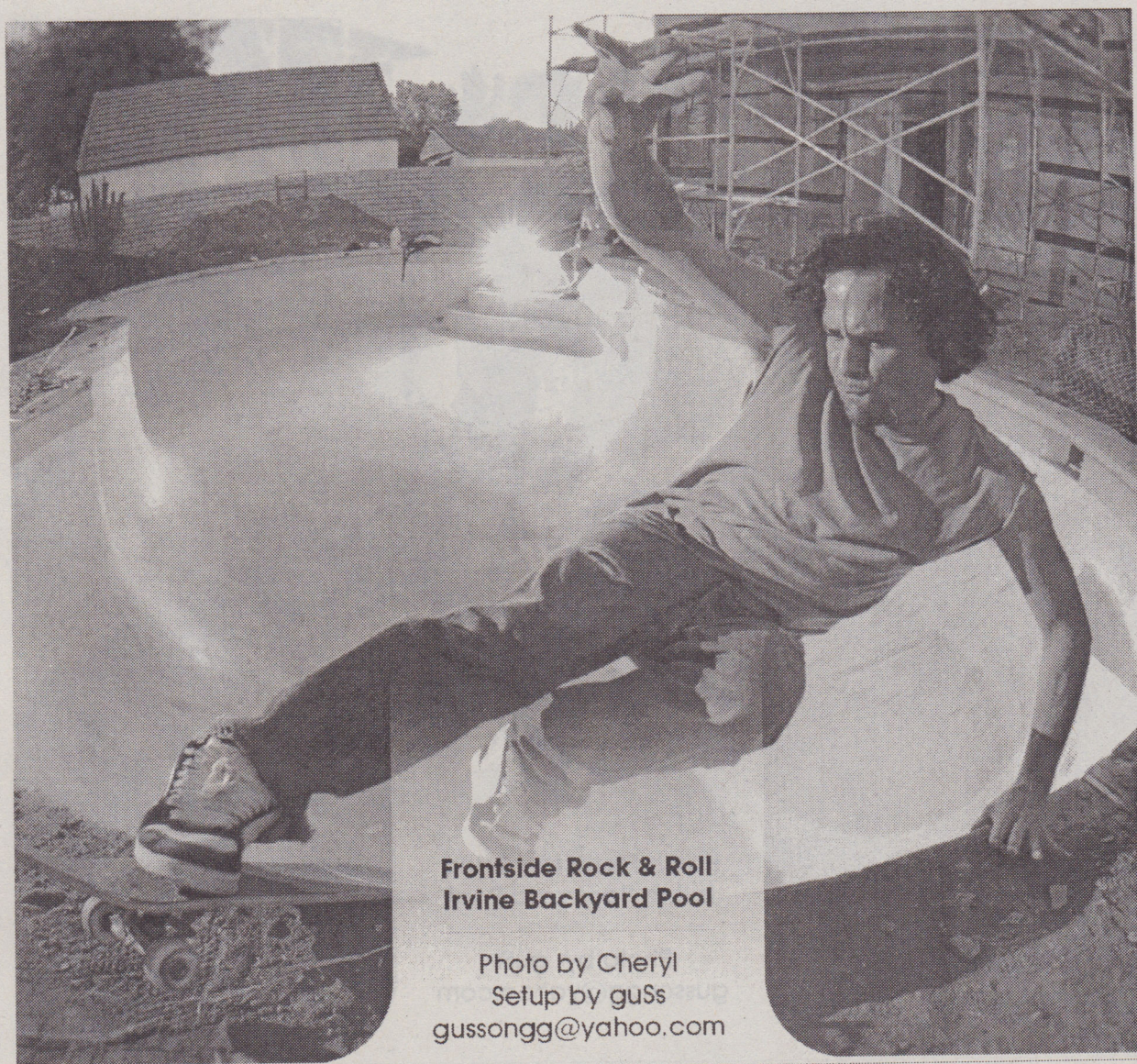


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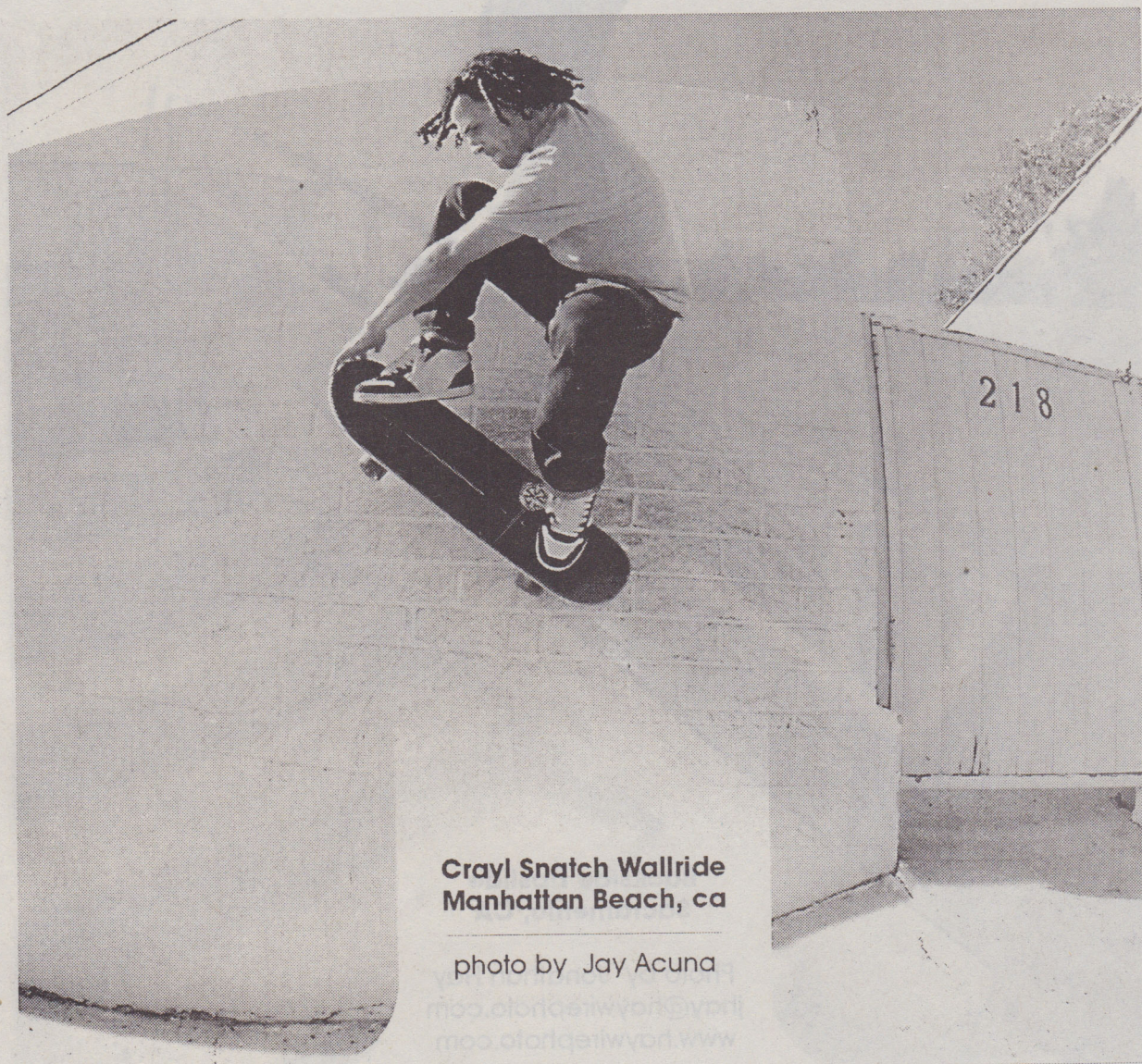
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Irvine Backyard Pool**

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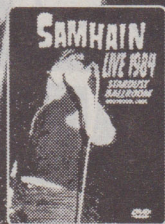
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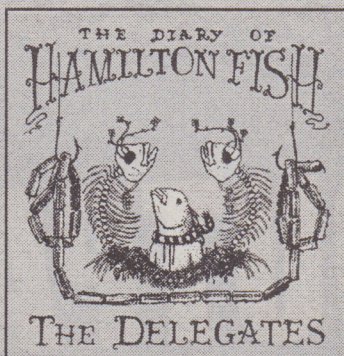
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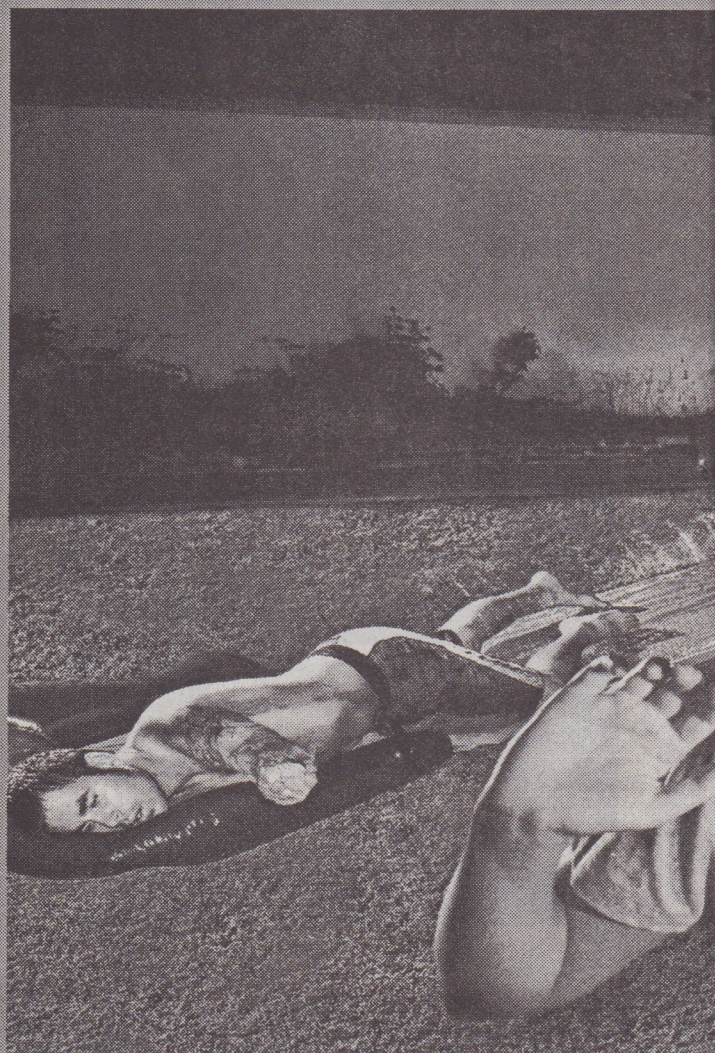
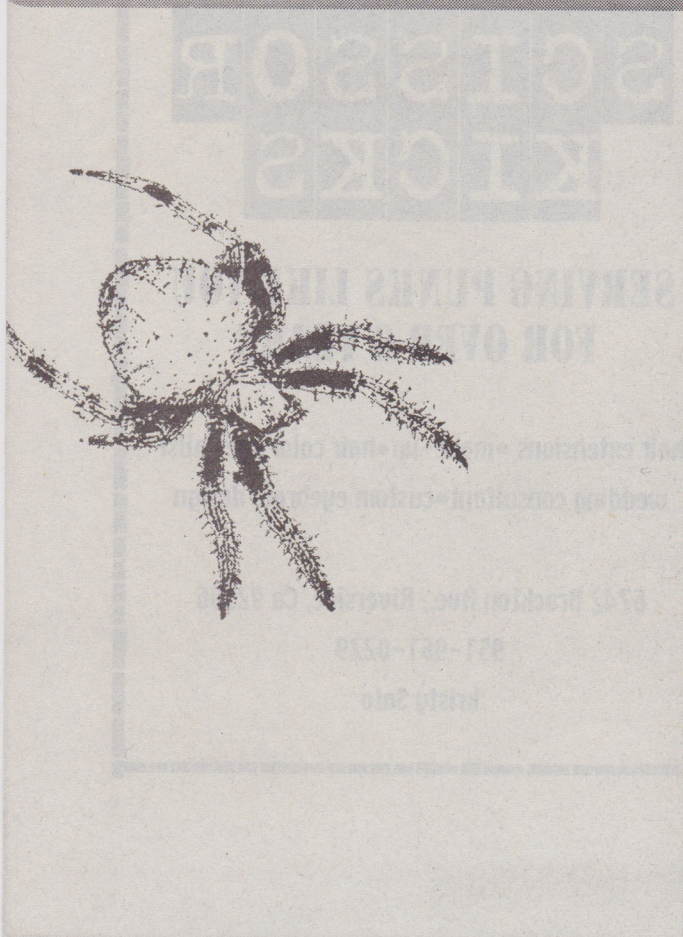
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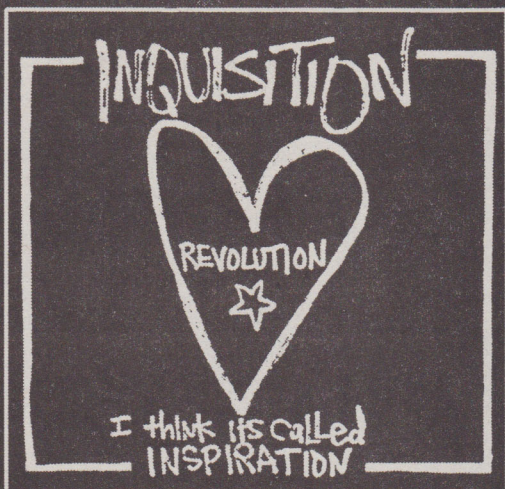
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INQUISITION

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A band like Inquisition made a dent in the underground punk community in their heyday, when they should have been a full blown car crash. -Tim Barry (AVAIL)

Very few things will leave as lasting an impression on me as the first chord of the first song I heard by them.
-Jason Black (HOT WATER MUSIC)

Inquisition had it all, the energy, the desperation, political lyrics, it was all there and it got me so psyched. -Tim (ENSIGN)

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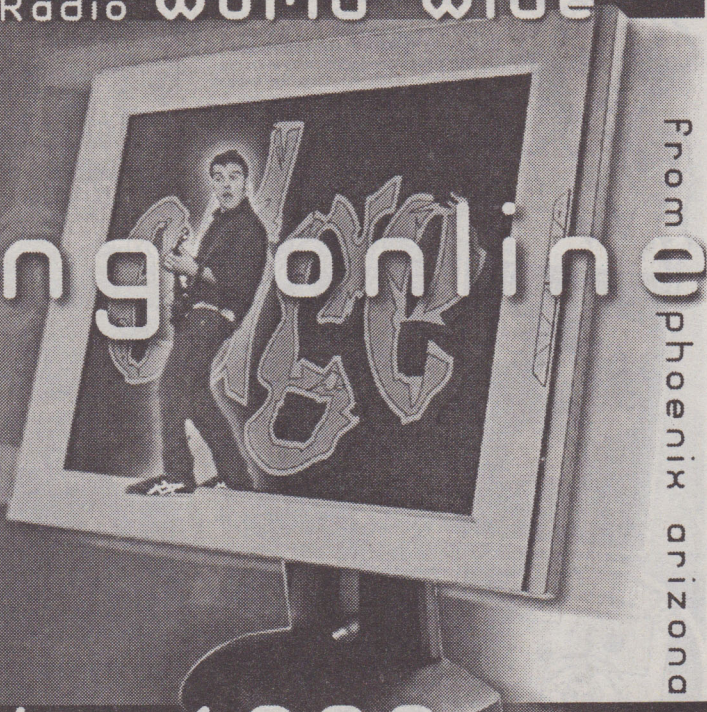
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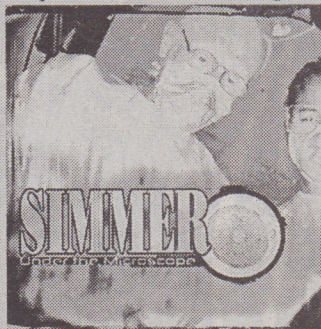
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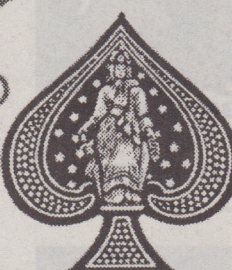
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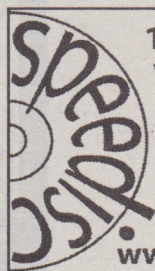
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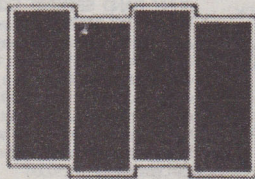
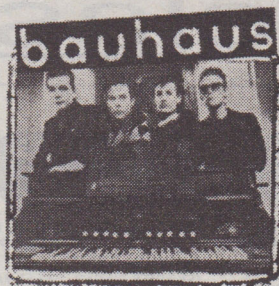
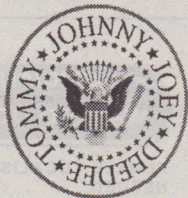
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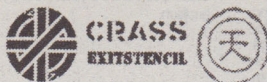
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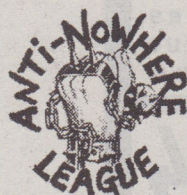
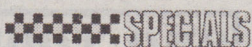
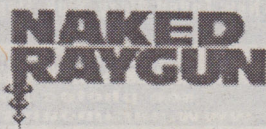
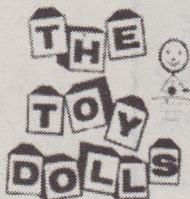
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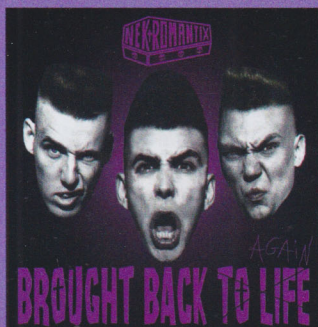
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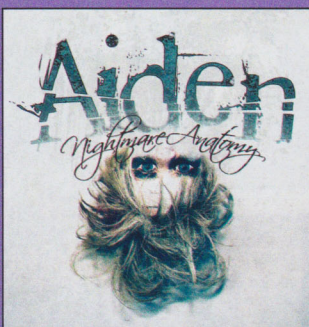
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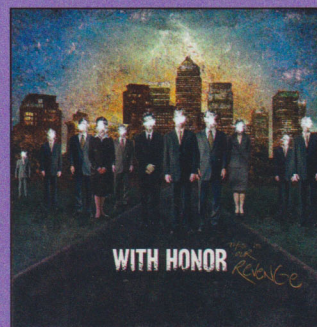
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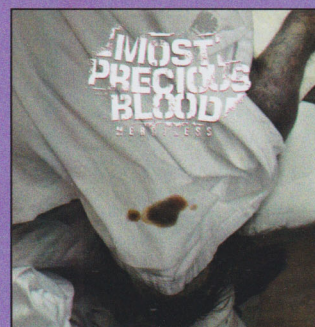
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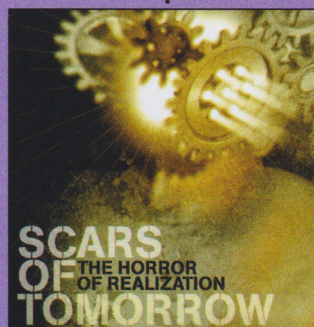
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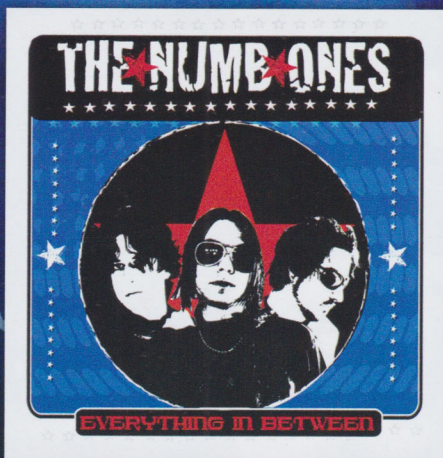
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